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Mr. WARBURTON'S

ANATOMY BILL,

THOUGHTS ON ITS MISCHIEVOUS TENDENCY ; WITH

SUGGESTIONS FOR AN ENTIRELY NEW ONE,

FOUNDED UPON AN AVAILABLE

ANTI-SEPTIC PROCESS,

IN AN APPEAL TO MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS, STUDENTS OF ANATOMY, AND THE PUBLIC AT LARGE, ON THE INJURY TO MEDICAL SCIENCE AND THE HINDERANCES TO THE DECENT INTERMENT OF UNCLAIMED PAUPER BODIES NOW DELIVERED UP FOR ANATOMICAL "EXAMINATION," CONSEQUENT UPON THE REJECTION OF SUCH A PROCESS.

BIBLIOTHECA ANATOMICA

BY WILLIAM ROBERTS.

LONDON:

J. OLLIVIER, 59, PALL MALL.

1843.

[PRICE TWO SHILLINGS.]

SIMPKIN, PRINTER, 70½, STRAND.

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APPEAL TO MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS, &c.

The Study of Anatomy is so connected with the Healing Art, that it is hardly possible to over-rate its importance. The Medical Practitioner, or Student, who has not paid minute attention to this department of knowledge, can never be qualified for the higher walks of his profession; and no Medical School, can be in a proper state of efficiency, which does not furnish ample means for prosecuting this particular branch of science.

But important as is the Study of Anatomy to the Medical Profession, the public have a still deeper, though less immediate interest in its due cultivation, along with that of every other branch, because the public, after all, are the chief gainers or sufferers by skilful or unskilful practice.

In any country the science of Anatomy would be exceedingly valuable; but in one where things are in so artificial a state as here, where manufactures, mining operations, and the use of machinery, dangerous to life and limb, are carried to an unprecedented extent; a knowledge of Anatomy can hardly be too widely diffused. Accidents of all kinds, including some of the most serious and perplexing character, are hourly happening in obscure parts of the country, at a distance from Hospital Surgeons; and where the ordinary country practitioners are, of necessity, called in to do their best, whatever be the amount or the deficiency of their attainments.

But though the public are so deeply concerned that the study of Human Anatomy should be extensively prosecuted, the feelings of our nature are apt to revolt at the means which

are necessary for this end. These, which may be called instinctive feelings, are implanted in us for wise reasons; and are shared by all classes of society. If it be urged that there are instances of persons in the middle and higher ranks, who get the better of these feelings,—*prejudices* as some might be disposed to call them—and calmly contemplate the case of their remains, after death, being submitted to the dissecting knife, it is to be borne in mind that this is not consented to for the public advantage, but with a view to the satisfaction and information of surviving relatives; and that the examination is generally limited to ascertaining the cause of death, and seldom, if ever, occupies more than a few hours. The same is true of those cases where, in the same classes of society, consent is given by near relatives to the opening of the body of some member of their family. In these cases, the body submitted to Anatomical Examination, remains on the same premises where it was first laid out—whoever may be the operator, the chosen medical attendant of the deceased is uniformly present; all is done in privacy, and with the strictest decorum, and the rites of Christian burial are in no respect violated, and seldom postponed more than a day or two in consequence.

To dissection, consent is occasionally given, in particular cases, in the middle and higher classes of society; but to such exposure and treatment of bodies, as is usual, after death, in Schools of Anatomy, not one individual in 10,000 in those walks of life, would consent, either in reference to his own remains after death, or those of any relative for whom he had ever entertained the slightest regard.

The poorer classes of society are as unwilling as the rich that their remains should be entrusted to the Schools of Anatomy: if this had not been the case, that race of men called "resurrectionists," would never have carried on the profitable trade they did previously to the passing of the Anatomy Act.

The objection, we have said, is natural to us all; high and low, rich and poor. That it was the bounden duty of the Legislature to take means to remedy the scandalous state of things, which existed before the passing of the Anatomy Act, no reasonable man would think of denying: but what is done, should be done upon just and equitable principles, and the interest, feelings, and even prejudices of the *poor* as well as the *rich*, should be regarded. He who is clothed in purple and fine linen, and fares sumptuously every day; and he who pines in poverty, and it may be has but rags to cover him, are equally entitled, in the sight of God and man, to be considered in this matter.

The jealousy that subsisted between the public and private Schools of Anatomy, before the passing of Mr. WARBURTON'S Act, had raised the price of bodies to an extravagant height; the private Schools struggling for existence, and the public ones aiming at monopoly, the old established rates were no longer any rule; and at length the cupidity of the purloiners of dead bodies, was so stimulated by this eagerness and rivalry on the part of the receivers, that the most extravagant demands were made and acceded to.

This state of things was highly dangerous. It was believed to have led to murder; and undoubtedly, the temptation had become so great, that it was likely to lead to it. The preamble of Mr. WARBURTON'S Act affirms, that to supply human bodies for the purpose of Anatomical Examination, divers great and grievous crimes had been committed, and "lately murder, for the single object of selling, for such purpose, the bodies of the persons so murdered."

The public mind became alarmed in consequence; and advantage was taken of that alarm, to bring forward the Anatomy Bill of 1832, than which a more hypocritical, partial, or deceptive Bill, never was concocted.

Disgusting and alarming as were the means by which the Schools of Anatomy were supplied at that time, it is a point not to be lost sight of, that all classes of the community had their share of the annoyance; all were liable to be reached by it. But by the Bill of 1832, the upper and middle classes of society were protected, while the poor alone were left exposed, in the event of destitution or death, to be delivered up to the Anatomical Schools.

The Bill of 1832 is drawn with consummate art. One of its main objects was to *victimize* a certain class, and it accomplishes its purpose without naming that class. The intention of those who drew it up, was—to the utmost extent possible—to lay their hands upon the bodies of those, who might be driven by penury, disease, or accident, into our Poor-Houses, hospitals and infirmaries. But in no one of its one-and-twenty clauses, is there any mention made of those establishments.

Again, the Anatomy Bill of 1832 is so cautiously worded, that no other terms than "anatomical *examination*" are used to express the purpose for which the bodies are delivered over. The words "anatomical *examination*" are studiously repeated, at least, *ten* different times, being in themselves expressive of no more than what may take place in any ordinary *post-mortem* examination.

There was a design in this. The object of the framers of the Bill was, to make the public believe, that *identity* would be preserved; without which, no clauses providing for the interment of bodies, would be worth the parchment upon which they were written. The words "anatomical *examination*" were used to *disguise* instead of express the real intention. The advocates of the Bill knew, that the process in Anatomical Schools is such, that what with sloughing away, and what with being hacked and cut to pieces, there is scarcely a solitary instance where the identity of a body could be proved

when the time for interment has arrived, though the richest inheritance might happen to depend upon the proof.

In most cases little else remains than an assemblage of disconnected bones, well nigh denuded of the flesh; which, having soon become one mass of corruption and putrefaction, has been day by day removed and put out of sight. Such is the ordinary havoc and waste, that what is still *called* "the body," and is ultimately deposited in the coffin or shell, does not upon an average weigh more than one-fourth, and certainly *less than one-third*, of what it did when it was first delivered over for "anatomical *examination*". A more scandalous mis-use of terms, it would not be possible to conceive.

The Bill provides "that *every such body* so removed as aforesaid, for the purpose of—*examination* [still keeping up the hypocritical pretence *of mere examination*], shall, before such removal, be placed in a decent coffin or shell, and be removed therein:" that this can be done at the first stage of the proceedings, no one doubts; but the framers of the Bill go on to say, that "the party removing the same, or causing the same to be removed as aforesaid, shall make provision that such body, after undergoing anatomical *examination*, [again mark the words!] be decently interred."

The cool effrontery of the framers of the bill is, in this part of the clause, completely exhibited, "the body" say they, "after undergoing anatomical examination," is to be "decently interred." Why, the body spoken of in the first part of the clause, and to which this latter part is made to refer, no longer exists! There is *no* such body. There may be a residue of disjointed *bones* it is true; but a heap of bones no more constitutes a human body, than did Lord Peter's crust of bread constitute, as he insisted it did, excellent good mutton.*

* See Dean Swift's "Tale of a Tub."

The framers of the Bill, with a degree of levity and assurance, worthy of Lord Peter himself—fully aware that three-fourths or two-thirds of the body have been wasted, or consigned to troughs, pits, and night-carts,—require that this residue of disjointed bones, the identity of which is no longer capable of proof, though fortunes and titles were dependent upon it, shall not only be "decently interred," but interred, they go on to say, in "*consecrated ground*, or in some other public burial ground, in use for persons of that religious persuasion, to which the person whose body was so removed belonged." And thus the hypocritical, and (we had almost said) *atheistical* framers of the Bill, make the clergy of the established church, and the ministers of all religious persuasions, assist in carrying out and completing the farce, by performing solemn services; which, under the circumstances, are a mockery of all that is most sacred, and talk of "committing to the dust the body of their dear brother or sister, who has departed this life," when a trick, and nothing less, has been deliberately played off upon them; and in the coffin or shell, thus interred in consecrated or other burial ground, there is no body at all.

Until the Legislature shall honestly interpose to put a stop to such fraudulent and iniquitous practices as these, the minister of religion, who has reason to suspect that he is thus practised upon, would be perfectly justified in ordering, before he begins to read the burial service, that the coffin or shell should be opened, and the truth ascertained, whether it contain a human body or not. We have said, he would be perfectly justified; and this we re-assert, without reference to the last words of the same clause, which require that "a certificate of the interment of *such body*," should be given.

But the framers of the Bill, as if to leave nothing undone that art and hypocrisy could suggest, to lull the public, and especially the parties most affected by it, proposed that *Inspectors*

should be appointed to see that on the part of Parish Boards, Masters of Workhouses, Teachers, Students, Undertakers, and Clergy, every thing was done correctly. Each Inspector was to have a district to superintend; and it was to be the duty of the Secretary of State to direct "in what manner" each Inspector should "transact the duties of his office." Thus was assurance made doubly sure; and a system which, from first to last, has been one of the grossest deception, was made to appear to the unsuspecting public, all that could be desired.

The Inspector has uniformly taken care never to be where his presence was most wanted, and as to "inspecting" the contents of a single coffin, or shell, before its last removal, for the purpose of seeing that the body, about which the framers of the Bill affected to be so solicitous, was really there for interment, such an idea never once entered his head; though assuming (which we believe would be about the mark) that his salary exceeded £800 per annum, and the number of bodies at his disposal averaged 600, he must have been in the receipt of not less than £1 6s. 8d. for each and every body *nominally* interred.

The plan of appointing "Inspectors" had not only the effect of deceiving the public, by giving a notion of certainty and security in reference to the burial clauses of the Bill, for which there was no real foundation; but its operation was to give to parties chosen by the friends, and some of them the actual Shareholders, of a particular School of Anatomy, the power of crippling and crushing all the private Anatomical Schools. For that purpose, we hesitate not to say, the office of Inspector has been used. By withholding from those establishments their fair proportion of subjects at the beginning of a season, by sending them subjects at inconvenient times (on the eve, for instance, of the Christmas vacation, when both private and public schools have their holidays), and by other means, most of the private schools have been closed.

Again the Bill says not one syllable about how the bodies were to be distributed, so that if the Inspector had used all his influence to give any one hospital a monopoly, he would not have acted illegally. The framers of the Bill, no doubt, had excellent reasons for laying down no rules for equitable distribution—the gentlemen who had embarked in private Schools were soon made sensible of this.

The Anatomy Bill of 1832, in whatever point of view regarded, was a fraud deliberately practised upon the poorer classes. The interposition of the Legislature, had long been imperatively called for; about that, their cannot be two opinions. But the first step should have been to appropriate, for the purpose of Anatomical Science, all the bodies of *convicted felons* happening to die during the period of their incarceration. There is no reason to doubt that, under proper arrangements, an ample supply might have been derived from that source. But, supposing that had not been found to be the case, the Legislature might have gone one step farther, and have enacted that the bodies of deceased persons, unclaimed by any known relative or friend, and, in the regular course of things, chargeable to parishes or public institutions for their interment, should be made liable to be submitted to *post-mortem* examination.

In the absence, however, of an Anti-septic Process, the period during which the body might have been kept uninterred should have been limited to seven days, and its treatment should have been restricted to such ordinary *post-mortem* examination, as would allow of the entire body being decently sewed up and put together again, as in the case of a body opened and examined by consent of friends and relatives. And nothing should have been done that would destroy, or render difficult, the proof of identity.

To talk of the *decent interment*, and the christian burial of a body, where less than this is done, is only to insult the memory of the dead, and to make a mockery and farce

of institutions the most sacred. Whatever operations beyond what these restrictions admit of, are desirable for the advancement of Anatomical Science, should be performed upon the bodies of those who have become chargeable to the community by their crimes, and upon whom, therefore, Society has a clear and undeniable claim.

Thus far, and no farther, should the Legislature have gone in 1832, *in the absence of an available Anti-septic Process;* and under the impression that it was visionary and hopeless to inquire for one. Whatever inconvenience might have arisen from such restrictions, should have been submitted to, and shared by the community at large, until, by equitable and honest means, the inconvenience could have been met and surmounted.

Lastly, the Legislature should not only have prohibited under heavy penalties, any but a licensed person from having in his possession, for Anatomical uses, any dead human *body*—to which the framers of the Bill of 1832, confined their attention—but it should have prohibited his having any *part* of a human body for such uses. Nor should it have stopped there; it should not have been content with alluding in the preamble of a Bill—as in the Anatomy Act of 1832—to *the fact of the sale of human bodies*, but it should have *prohibited, under heavy penalties, the sale of such bodies*, and *parts* of such bodies; and also (what is equivalent to the *sale* of them) the taking money for the Anatomical *use of them.* The Act, by not prohibiting the possession of *parts* of bodies, but confining the prohibition to *entire* bodies, and by attaching no penalty to the sale of either, still leaves the temptation to commit the most heinous of crimes.

Under the Act of 1832, the traffic in human bodies, though somewhat differently regulated, as explained in one of the letters to Sir James Graham, continues to all intents and purposes; and many a body is made to yield so enormous a profit, that Medical Schools can well afford douceurs of various

kinds to the Masters of workhouses, including presents to persons of even a higher grade. While writing this, the fact has come to our knowledge, of an elegant snuff box having been presented by certain parties connected with a very prominent school in the metropolis, which for the present shall be nameless, to the resident medical officer of one of our largest London workhouses, as a token of gratitude, no doubt, for the very abundant supplies of pauper bodies, which his kind interference had secured to them. As regards masters of workhouses, although many are highly respectable men, who would not compromise their duties in any way, there are others who would. A master of a workhouse belonging to one of the largest metropolitan parishes allowed eight pauper bodies to be clandestinely removed from his keeping in the space of five weeks, little more than two years ago. At whose solicitation the master referred to was prevailed upon to allow this, we are not prepared to say; but certain it is that, on one occasion, the Inspector of Anatomy himself, passing over the Board of Directors of that identical parish —applied by letter to the then master of the Poor-House, stating that "*the supply of Anatomical bodies continued so scarce, that he should feel obliged by any assistance which it might be in the power of that master to afford him at the moment.*"

A curious fact connected with this parish still remains to be told, namely, that while a certain favored School of Anatomy has been receiving its regular supply of bodies from it, with a charge of not more than half a crown upon each, and has been liable for no charges for burial; these bodies have been cut up into parts, and apportioned for the use of the Students, at the enormous profit of 1500 and 2000 per cent!

That the Medical Schools should be liberally maintained, is certainly desirable; but there are other ways by which that might be accomplished, without descending to such base, sordid, and we will add, dangerous traffic as this, which may

lead, as it has lead, to "great and grievous crimes," and even "murder" being committed; for be it observed, that before the competition became so excessive, the "body snatchers" had been well contented with £3 10s. and £4 a subject; prices which, now, are often more than realized.

It was in December, 1835, that after two years of experiments and laborious research, the Anti-septic Process, in connexion with which the present appeal is made, was fully matured and brought to its perfect state. Without, in this stage of the argument, assuming that the Legislature was bound to approve of and enforce that particular process, we will only, for the present, say that at all events, so near an approximation was made, and such testimonies were at once elicited in its favour, that it may very fairly become a question whether it was not the duty of the government, as soon as it was apprised of what had been effected towards the attainment of so desirable an end, to have *invited*, and voluntarily held out the prospect of reward for, the discovery of an Anti-septic Process, applicable to anatomical uses, and at the same time "cheap, innocuous, and easy of application."

The Science of Anatomy could not fail to be materially advanced by such a process. Its pursuit would cease to be a dangerous and disgusting occupation. *The enormous waste of human bodies would be arrested;* and from each one, far more information might be derived than can be obtained at present. A single body would probably answer the purpose of three or four; and the bodies of convicted felons would suffice to meet the demands of Anatomical Science, pursued far more extensively than it is at present. An entire stop might be put to the hateful system which is now directed against the poor and destitute, and all that immensely numerous class just above the poor and destitute, who, by honest industry, and in the sweat of their brow, earn their bread, and subsist upon daily, weekly, or monthly wages. The Bill of 1832

is directed against them, *covertly*, but not the less specifically, and exclusively.

Under the 8th clause of the Act, making "provision in case of persons directing Anatomical Examination after their death" (using the marginal note), about *six* persons have so done; while the average number of bodies which the Inspector of Anatomy has had at his disposal annually, chiefly from the Metropolitan Poor-houses, and under the operation of the 7th clause of the Act, has been about six hundred. The Anatomy Act has been in force more than ten years; and its 7th clause has furnished six thousand bodies, while its 8th has supplied about half-a-dozen. The proportion therefore is as one to a thousand. The thousand have been taken from the poorer classes; the unit has been the quota afforded by all the classes above. Of those bodies of the poor it may confidently be asserted, that *not one has had interment*. This, to some, may be a startling assertion, but the fact is unquestionable, that no single one, if language has any definite meaning, has had interment. It was said of a certain idolatrous king, in a Book which the framers of that Bill despised, that he should be buried with the burial of an ass; but the Christian burial which the framers of the Anatomy Bill provided for their innocent victims, notwithstanding their hypocritical pretence of providing that "every such body should be interred in consecrated ground," &c., did not amount to that. They did not even secure for the remains of the poor and the destitute, the widow and the orphan (for many such an one that six thousand could not have failed to include) "the burial of an ass."

It behoves every statesman who has his country's interest at heart, to consider the inevitable consequences to which such policy must lead. The separation of the lower from the upper and middle ranks of society; the quarrel of the lower with all above them, has been the great distinguishing feature

of the times. The separation has been making such alarming progress, that unless a very great change comes over the spirit of Legislation, the gulf, which is widening every day, will soon become impassable.

Should the Legislature be disposed to retrace its steps, with regard to the Anatomy Bill of 1832, the discovery of an Antiseptic Process will be one of the points which must engage its attention; and on the supposition that no satisfactory mode of preventing the decomposition of human bodies has yet been found out, its discovery should be invited.

Let us here endeavour dispassionately to consider what tests any process offered to Parliament and the country should be required to undergo, and with what conditions it should comply.

1.—The process should be such as to deserve the approval of eminent Anatomists; persons of practical experience in the Science.

2.—It should be applicable to *summer* as well as *winter* dissection.

3.—It should be capable of preserving human bodies in a natural, moist, and fresh condition for a reasonable time.

4.—It should be cheap, innocuous, and easy of application.

Let us next proceed to inquire how far the process, to which it is the object of this appeal to draw public attention, is capable of standing these tests. First, a jury of ten men shall be empanelled, who shall all have been *senior teachers* of schools. They shall "well and truly try" the case, and be called upon to deliver a unanimous verdict.

That the verdict may have the greater weight, the jury shall include the three men who have been the most celebrated and successful teachers of Anatomy in the metropolis, namely, Sir Astley Cooper, Bart. of Guy's Hospital; Mr. J. H. Green, of St. Thomas's Hospital; and Sir

BENJAMIN BRODIE, of St. George's Hospital; and the list of authorities shall comprise GILBERT MACKMURDO, of St. Thomas's; BRANSBY B. COOPER, of Guy's; EDWARD STANLEY of St. Bartholomew's; R. B. TODD, of Westminster Hospital; RICHARD PARTRIDGE, of King's College; R. O. GRAINGER, of Webb-street School; and FREDERIC C. SKEY, of Aldersgate-street School. They have agreed upon their verdict, which they deliver in the following terms:—"We are convinced, from what we have seen, that Mr. ROBERTS's preparation is capable of keeping, in a moist and inoffensive state, the flesh of animals; and we think that it may become, in this way, of important use to Surgeons, and Students of Anatomy, and that it may be made to promote materially, the objects of the Anatomical Bill."

These are the expressions they unanimously use; and they conclude by stating, that "they shall be glad if any means can be devised, by which the discovery may be made cheaply available to the profession, without obliging its inventor to tie it up by patent right.

This verdict was delivered in the form of a certificate, to which each of those Teachers of Anatomy, voluntarily, and upon "conviction," fixed his name in the month of March, 1836. The certificate is given entire, along with other documents, in the Appendix.

The next witness to be called is Dr. JAMES C. SOMERVILLE, at that time Inspector of Schools of Anatomy; a gentleman who, judging by his subsequent conduct in reference to this matter, may be regarded as a reluctant witness.—"Dr. SOMERVILLE, pray what do you know of Mr. ROBERTS's invention?"—*Answer:* "Having availed myself of the opportunity which you (MR. ROBERTS) have afforded me, of examining various portions of the human body preserved by you, some for a period *exceeding six weeks*, I owe it to you, no less than to the Medical Profession, to bear my tes-

timony to the merit of the process by which such decidedly beneficial results have been obtained. The portion of an *amputated leg and the arm*, called for particular attention, inasmuch, as the internal parts did not appear to be hardened, and but slightly discoloured, while they were perfectly free from any offensive smell."

Dr. S. having been directed by LORD JOHN RUSSELL, at that time Secretary of State for the Home Department, to afford the discoverer every facility for the further experimental proof of the efficacy of the process, concludes his letter, from which the above is a quotation, by saying "that he considers that the results of the experiments are already decisive of the invention, and trusts that the discoverer will not think it necessary to have recourse to any more extended means of proving it." Dr. SOMERVILLE, has in this stage of the inquiry one only point upon which he speaks with reservation. He is "disposed to believe that the process is likely to be useful," but to what extent he adds, "must wholly depend upon its cost, and the facility of its application"—perfectly reasonable, this reservation; and it is quite right that the Government and the public should be quite satisfied upon those points. (DR. SOMERVILLE'S Letter dated March 10, 1836, is copied *verbatim* in the Appendix.)*

To revert to the certificates granted by the ten eminent Teachers of Anatomy, it may possibly be urged by some objector, that the opinions of those gentlemen would have had additional weight, if they had been separately, and not *conjointly* given: as, in that case, each individual Teacher would have used the language and phrases suggested by his own mind.

Mr. ROBERTS is fortunately, in a position to furnish the *separate* opinions of five of the eminent Teachers who signed the joint certificate, and is fully sensible of the high value of the documents from which he now proceeds to quote. (The

* See Appendix (F).

whole of them are copied in the Appendix*.) These certificates are remarkable for introducing many important points which are not alluded to in the joint certificate, or if alluded to, *not so specifically.*

One of the gentlemen who voluntarily steps forward to add to his first testimony is Mr. JOSEPH HENRY GREEN; a host in himself. His high position in the profession, the success that has attended him as a practitioner, his independence of character, his unimpeachable integrity of purpose, and the caution and wariness of all his movements as an operator, render his opinion of singular value. There are men who may do *indiscreet* acts, but Mr. GREEN is not liable to get into scrapes of that kind, and to have, as other men may have had, to *eat* their own words. SIR JAMES GRAHAM, in a speech to which we shall presently have to refer, mentioning three men, of whom Mr. GREEN is one, pronounced this high eulogium upon them, that "three more eminent and competent judges of the matter could scarcely have been found." Having noted thus much with respect to Mr. GREEN, we proceed to extract from his own separate certificate, in his own hand writing. It is dated March 22, 1836.

Mr. GREEN begins by saying that he cannot doubt that the general use of Mr. ROBERT'S Anti-septic Process would render the *number* of subjects available for the purposes of dissection and the regularity of the supply by far greater than it was at that time: "since" he adds, "without the means of preservation in a state fitted for Anatomical purposes, *which your plan alone offers,* many subjects must be *completely lost and wasted!*" Mr. GREEN concludes by saying that, for the above reasons, he regards Mr. ROBERTS'S process, if it could be carried on at a moderate expense,† as a most valuable aid to

* See Appendix H.

† The cost of the process would be under ten shillings for each body.

the operation of the Anatomy Act; and by testifying that the parts preserved appeared to him in as perfect a condition for dissection as in the recent state.

Such was the deliberate opinion of Mr. JOSEPH HENRY GREEN, in March, 1836, expressed in his own words. To another letter from the same most eminent and upright man, written more than two years subsequently, it would be inconvenient to allude in this stage of the Appeal, farther than to say, that it gives satisfactory proof that his first opinion had undergone no alteration.

The next witness among the original ten, who subsequently favored the discoverer with his deliberate opinion, in his own hand writing (the letter will be found entire in the Appendix;* and bears date March 22, 1836), is Mr. FREDERIC C. SKEY, Teacher of Anatomy in Aldersgate-street School. He states, that "any mode by which the progress of decomposition can be arrested, must necessarily be advantageous to the Student," for two reasons:

First, "Because it enables him to pursue his subjects with greater care and deliberation, and to revise the occupation of previous days' dissection:" and Secondly, "Because it would afford the means of summer dissection."

In conclusion, he thinks the discovery "calculated to *confer great advantage* on the Students of Anatomy in every country," and considers that the expense of its application, *per* subject, ought not to exceed the sum of *ten or twelve shillings*. Mr. ROBERTS has another certificate from the same Teacher of Anatomy, dated May 1836,† in which he states that the discoverer's plan had proved highly successful; that it had accomplished the desired end without producing hardness or dryness, and that the invention might be advantageously applied, in aid of the *difficulties* that at present attend the Study of Anatomy in this country.

* See Appendix (I.)

† See Appendix (J.)

The third gentleman, who, after signing the Joint Certificate, favored the discoverer with his written opinion, is Mr. RICHARD PARTRIDGE, Professor of Anatomy at King's College. (The letter itself, dated March 19, 1836, can be referred to in the Appendix.)*

He begins by stating the important fact, to which attention is here most earnestly requested (for it has a very important bearing upon an Anti-septic Process), that "the Schools are not at *present supplied with above one-half of the bodies required for dissection during the winter.*" And, as the deficiency is particularly felt, he says, at the beginning of the session, he thinks the Anti-septic in question "would be valuable in preserving such unclaimed bodies as might be given up by the parishes during the two preceding months of August and September." By this plan, he remarks, "there would be something at least, for Students to work on," and as the burial of the bodies would only be delayed a little longer, he cannot see any objection to it.

Mr. GREEN, we have shown, refers to the advantages which Mr. ROBERTS's plan "*alone offers.*" Mr. PARTRIDGE makes an equally pointed allusion to this fact, *entering rather more into detail*—he thus enlarges: "from what I have seen of the effect of your Anti-septic, I can declare that it possesses several advantages over others, which, at different times, have been tried. It does not evaporate like spirit, but preserves the parts in their *natural moist* condition and appearance; it does not spoil instruments, or unnaturally harden the flesh, like oxy-muriate of mercury, salt, nitre, alum," &c.

Mr. PARTRIDGE concludes by stating that the preparation in question *would contribute in an important degree to* THE HEALTH OF THE STUDENTS; adding, that to be generally useful in Anatomical Schools, the expense of preserving each body should not exceed *ten* shillings.

* See Appendix (G.)

In the summer of 1836, Mr. ROBERTS entered upon a series of experiments, at Guy's Hospital, a circumstantial account of which he has given in a letter addressed to SIR JAMES GRAHAM, which bears date the 25th of October. To that letter Mr. ROBERTS will have occasion to advert in this Appeal. The unhandsome treatment he experienced from Mr. HARRISON, and some of his underlings, in the course of those experiments (all fully set forth in that letter), led to Mr. R.'s obtaining, as a matter of prudence and precaution, three additional certificates, all having special reference to those experiments commenced in July, and which did not terminate until the beginning of October in that year. It is here necessary to refer to those certificates (though commented upon in the letters to SIR JAMES GRAHAM), in order to show, in a connected view, the testimony of eminent Anatomists in favor of the discovery, and the extent to which that testimony, from sources far above suspicion, has gone.

The first of these three certificates in order of time, is one dated August 25, 1836, and signed by Mr. G. MACKMURDO;* he having also signed the joint certificate in March of that same year. Mr. MACKMURDO begins by saying, that he has very carefully examined some bodies which had been preserved for different lengths of time by means of the anti-septic fluid in question; the reference is to the bodies which Mr. ROBERTS was, at that time, publicly exhibiting at Guy's. On no other entire human bodies did Mr. ROBERTS ever experiment; his earlier experiments had been confined to *parts* of bodies. Mr. MACKMURDO, at Mr. ROBERTS's request, had come to Guy's, and seen for himself the result of the process, and his observations had been made within a day or two of the date of the certificate. He goes on to say, "I most willingly express my opinion, that it (the anti-septic fluid) is very likely to prove *a valuable acquisition to all Medical Schools.*"

* See Appendix (L.)

Mr. MACKMURDO then proceeds in this certificate to show, that he had paid very minute attention to the matter of which he affirms. He says, "there was one body with which I was much pleased,—viz. *one which had been injected one month after* you had it in your possession. THE INJECTION HAD RUN WELL, and the parts which were dissected looked VERY FRESH, and exhibited all the characters of the several tissues. I likewise examined a limb, in which the *large* and *deep seated* muscles had been dissected, and they possessed the colour and freshness of a body very recently dead. Under these circumstances I hope you will meet with that encouragement to which your exertions have fully entitled you."

Mr. R. has also another certificate from the same highly eminent and honourable man, dated September 24, 1836, being one month later. During that month Mr. MACKMURDO had made further observations upon Mr. ROBERTS's experiments at Guy's; having again been an eye-witness of them on two or three occasions during that period. Mr. MACKMURDO begins his second certificate by stating, that *on several occasions*, he had examined bodies—(again attention is requested to the fact, that these must have been the bodies at Guy's)—which had been preserved by Mr. ROBERTS's anti-septic fluid for various periods of time: and that he most willingly bore his testimony in favor of the discovery.

The testimony which Mr. MACKMURDO then proceeds to give, is even more important than his first statement. It is hardly possible to find expressions more definite and conclusive than those he now makes use of: "I have dissected," he says, "portions of bodies preserved in this manner for months previous to my visits. I found them *free from the usual offensive smell; the structures were preserved in their integrity, and the* DEEP SEATED MUSCLES, &c., exhibited the *color* and *firmness*, peculiar to the flesh of bodies *recently* dead. The *skin*, *vessels*, and *nerves*, as well as the *internal viscera*, excited my surprise by the natural and fresh appearance." He con-

cludes by referring to other advantages; for which, see the entire copy in the Appendix.*

The last of these three certificates obtained during, and in consequence of, Mr. ROBERTS's experiments at Guy's, is dated August 23, 1836, and is signed by Dr. R. B. TODD, Professor of Physiology and Morbid Anatomy at King's College. This gentleman had seen sundry experiments at Mr. ROBERTS's own residence, and *also those at Guy's Hospital.* This certificate, also, is given entire in the Appendix.† He states, "that he has had various opportunities of forming an opinion of the fluid, and that he believes it to be a most valuable acquisition to the Anatomist."

The next testimony is that of the late Dr. BIRKBECK. In a letter dated October 4, 1836,‡ and addressed to LORD JOHN RUSSELL, Dr. BIRKBECK states, "that he has repeatedly seen the results of the process, and considers it 'perfect.'" He thus concludes: "It is agreed by every Anatomist who has spoken of it, that it is most excellent and most valuable; I cannot therefore consider a more fitting opportunity for the exercise of liberality towards an inventor, by such an administration as that which, happily for the country, now exists."

With the late Dr. BIRKBECK, Mr. ROBERTS had many subsequent interviews. In them the Doctor expressed freely, and without reserve, his regret at the difficulties Mr. ROBERTS had to encounter, while LORD MELBOURNE was at the head of affairs; and uniformly attributed them to Mr. WARBURTON's influence.

* See Appendix (M).

† See Appendix (K).

‡ See Appendix (N).

The last medical document to which Mr. ROBERTS has to solicit public attention, is a letter addressed to him by Mr. JOSEPH HENRY GREEN, dated May 28, 1838.* This document is one to which Mr. R. has already made a slight allusion. It is brief, but every line is expressive of a generous and sincere regret. Mr. GREEN begins by stating "that he encloses a letter to SIR ROBERT INGLIS, that Mr. ROBERTS may state his case to him."

He then proceeds as follows: "What to recommend, under the present difficulty in which you are involved, I do not see other than the one you have adopted, of bringing your case before the Parliament, by means of some influential member. I fear, however, that under the present circumstances, you will have the opposition of those, without whom your application will not be successful."

In this frank and considerate manner, did this high-minded man convey his feelings respecting the treatment which Mr. ROBERTS had met with; thus delicately did he allude to the opposition which had arisen since he had formed his favorable opinion of the process. To that opinion, it is clear he stands.

Having now shown the extent to which the Medical testimony goes, we come to the Non-Medical. In another stage of this Appeal, we said that the conditions with which an Anti-septic Process, to be extensively useful, should comply, should be the following: that it should be "cheap, innocuous, and easy of application." To all other points, the medical certificates have spoken in the most explicit terms. Its innocuous and inoffensive character had also been fully established.† The *only* questions, therefore, still left open, were, first, whether the process was cheap; and secondly, whether it was easy of application.

* See Appendix (O).

† Printed with the votes, June 29, 1842.

The long connexion that Mr. WARBURTON has had with this question, has been so fully explained in the last petition which Mr. ROBERTS presented to Parliament,* and especially in the letter to Sir JAMES GRAHAM, of the 25th Oct. 1842, that the only reason for introducing his name here, is to show by his testimony—to whom, as to the confidential agent of the government, Mr. ROBERTS had confided his secret—that every satisfaction was afforded on that head.

Mr. WARBURTON had required to be convinced, that the materials used in the process were "cheap, innocuous, and easy of application." Early in 1838, that gentleman having conducted some experiments himself, and used the Anti-septic material, the secret of which had been confided to him, made his report to Mr. RICE, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, expressing his decided conviction, that Mr. ROBERTS's invention was *fully entitled to the praise of both efficiency and cheapness.* Of that report Mr. ROBERTS is unable to produce a copy; but he can produce a letter from Sir GEORGE SINCLAIR, at that time upon intimate terms with Mr. WARBURTON, dated April 27, 1838, in which SIR GEORGE says:—"Mr. WARBURTON HAS EXPRESSED TO ME HIS DECIDED CONVICTION, THAT YOUR INVENTION IS FULLY ENTITLED TO THE PRAISE OF CHEAPNESS AND EFFICACY." And in another letter, which Mr. ROBERTS is able to produce, dated May 14, 1838, Sir GEO. SINCLAIR says, "that Mr. WARBURTON and himself might, if a committee were appointed, both be summoned as witnesses 'TO ATTEST THE SIMPLICITY AND EFFICACY OF YOUR PLAN.'"

The testimony in favor of this Anti-septic Process is now as complete as it is possible to make it, and nothing has been left undone by Mr. ROBERTS, that could reasonably be required, to establish his claim to public consideration.

Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Depart-

ment fully admitted in his speech on the 7th of July last,* that if Mr. ROBERTS had made such a discovery as he had described, he would be entitled to reward.

The question then arises, "Why is reward withheld?" We use the term "reward," because it has already been used by other parties; but the real question after all is, Why is that understanding not binding upon Her Majesty's government, which, between ordinary parties, would have been regarded in the light of a special contract?

Before we answer this question, it is necessary to advert to the Medical Certificates which were given to Mr. ROBERTS in the months of March, May, August, and September, 1836. The object in thus appealing to them, is to show the state in which the Anatomical Schools then were, in respect of the supply of subjects for dissection. Mr. GREEN, we have seen in his certificate dated March 22, 1836, had alluded to the scantiness, and also to the *irregularity* of the supply, stating that from the want of the means of preservation, many subjects were completely lost and wasted.

Mr. SKEY had laid stress upon the advantages of *summer* in addition to *winter* dissection.

Mr. PARTRIDGE, we have seen, had stated that the Schools of Anatomy had not above *one-half* the supply of bodies that was desirable; and had even pointed out the advantages of the process, suggesting that the unclaimed bodies of persons dying in the months of August and September, might, by its assistance, be made available for the session commencing in October. It is thus established by means of these certificates, that the Schools at that time were most inadequately supplied; and it was also apparent, that Mr. ROBERTS's fluid would completely remedy the evil.

The Inspector of Anatomy—was *he* aware of the defici-

* See the Report printed with this Appeal.

ency in the supply? *He was,* and he was also (see his letter dated March 10, 1836,) thoroughly convinced that the experiments Mr. ROBERTS had then made, were "*decisive of the invention*"—we use his own words.

On the 19th of September, 1836, the Inspector put forth a Circular, the great object of which was, to obtain for the Schools of Anatomy an increased supply. In that document he states, that the number of bodies received for Anatomical Examination in London, during the session 1835-6, had amounted to about 600; and in the same document he had adverted to "*increasing demand.*" What the deficiency had been, Mr. PARTRIDGE has told us. That gentleman, himself a Professor of Anatomy in one of the principal Medical Schools, had calculated, just six months before, that double the supply was wanted, unless an Anti-septic Process were introduced. The Inspector and the Schools, therefore, wanted 1,200 bodies, when they had but 600—if they determined to adhere to the old system, a system by pursuing which, "many bodies," they perfectly well knew, must necessarily be "*completely lost and wasted.*"

The adoption of an Anti-septic Process would have made every dead body as useful as three or four now are: five hundred would have gone as far as fifteen hundred or two thousand. But, as Mr. SKEY remarks in one of his certificates—and as the very term *anti-septic* implies—its introduction would have afforded the means of *summer dissection,* which might have affected the emoluments of the schools, emoluments now derived from winter courses only. One of two results would have followed the adoption of the process: the existing Anatomical Schools must have had *summer* as well as *winter* courses, and thus the Teachers would have had more labour to perform, or rival schools would have arisen which would have thrown their doors open to summer

pupils.* The private interests of the Teachers, and the interests of the public and of science, were thus at variance. Whether any alarm was felt respecting the advantages which might result to *provincial* schools, we are not prepared to say; but Mr. WARBURTON's letter of April 9, 1838,† sufficiently fixes certain of the London Teachers of Anatomy as exerting themselves to keep down Mr. ROBERTS's discovery on account of the facility it would afford for *summer teaching*.

The Inspector, in his Circular dated September 19, 1836, appears at his wits' end for means by which to give the Schools an increased supply, but writes as if he had never heard of an Anti-septic Process in his life; though he had *voluntarily*, and *uncalled upon*, committed himself‡ to a *decisive* opinion in favor of Mr. ROBERTS's process six months before. In his *Circular* of Sep. 19,§ he expresses his confident opinion, that were some of the Teachers to unite their exertions with his, a very increased supply of bodies would be obtained. For this purpose he proposes a Conference, and knowing, as he could not fail to do, that complaints had been made of unequal distribution, in that Circular he professes to be most solicitous that the just claims of each one of the schools should be met. And the Inspector concludes by inviting suggestions, which he promises to submit to the Secretary of State.

This circular is remarkable :—

* Mr. ROBERTS is desirous of introducing here a very important remark which Mr. J. H. GREEN once made to him in the course of conversation; namely, that *touch* and *light* were two very essential points in prosecuting Anatomical Examinations, and that they would be greatly facilitated by having the means of summer dissection.

† See Appendix (D).

‡ See Appendix (F).

§ See Appendix (A).

1.—For the confession it makes of the difficulties which had been experienced in working the Anatomy Act.

2.—For the total silence preserved in it, respecting an Anti-septic Process, *which would have instantly removed those difficulties.*

3.—It is remarkable as calling for *united efforts* to increase the supply.

It is further remarkable:—

4.—For its proposal of *a conference* among the Teachers, hardly any two of whom, previous to that time, if they were of rival schools, could be got to meet each other; such, at least, had been Mr. ROBERTS's experience.

The conference it would appear was held, and Dr. SOMERVILLE succeeded, in October 1836, in forming a Committee of Anatomical Teachers, the *professed* object of which was to bring the personal exertions and influence of the London Teachers of Anatomy, to bear upon the different metropolitan parishes, for the purpose of getting larger supplies of pauper remains. We have said its *professed* object, for no sooner did they assemble, than they endeavoured to undo the effect of their own deliberate acts, in reference to the Anti-septic Process. Mr. ROBERTS here desires to say, once for all, that he has no wish or intention to imply, that every gentleman who joined that Committee had necessarily other objects besides those which it professed. But, that very influential parties connected with that Committee, namely, Dr. SOMERVILLE, its originator; Mr. STANLEY, its first Chairman; Mr. PARTRIDGE, its first Secretary and Treasurer; and Mr. QUAIN, one of its earliest Members, intended, by means of that Association, to suppress Mr. ROBERTS's discovery, was immediately apparent. Be it observed, that the Committee chose the very worst possible time to form an Association for the purpose of getting *an increased supply* of

bodies (an additional six hundred per annum, according to the showing of Mr. PARTRIDGE, if they got what they wanted), when, during the spring, summer, and part of the autumn of that very year, they had seen, handled, and dissected *(some of them over and over again)*, Mr. ROBERTS's preparations, and had given certificates stating in substance—and Mr. JOSEPH HENRY GREEN (a gentleman, by the way, who never was a member of that Committee), distinctly in words—"*that many subjects must be completely lost and wasted without the means of preservation in a state fitted for Anatomical purposes.*"

All that Mr. ROBERTS has to say at present of the Inspector of Anatomy is, that he had a very close connexion and acquaintance with Mr. WARBURTON, and that he is a relative of Mr. HARRISON. Whether the Inspector of Anatomy, though the ostensible mover, was the mainspring of this movement, or whether he was only the agent and tool of others, is a matter of no great importance. Should it, however, be asked, what motive could he, in his position of Inpector of Schools of Anatomy, have, to form, or lend himself to a combination, one of whose objects was to keep down an important discovery, Mr. ROBERTS has only to add, that he cannot doubt that the Inspector adopted the course which he deemed most conducive to the interests of Mr. WARBURTON, and the School with which Mr. W. was connected.

Mr. ROBERTS deeply regrets to have had to name Mr. PARTRIDGE, not only as the Secretary of the Anatomical Committee, but as having acted a conspicuous part against his (Mr. R.'s) claims, as soon as that Committee was formed. About the middle of October, 1836, it assembled at Mr. PARTRIDGE's house, and there and then came to a determination to decline a proposal which Mr. ROBERTS had made, that each Student of Anatomy should pay 10s. per annum for the use of the Anti-septic Process. Mr. ROBERTS was

to have taken out a patent, and then to have granted licenses to the several Schools of Anatomy; the Teachers undertaking to pay ten shillings *per annum* for each pupil entered at their Schools, so long as he remained a Pupil. The Teachers could have covered themselves by a trifling addition to their fees. By taking out a patent, Mr. ROBERTS would have had a check upon unlicensed Schools.

This plan would have had the advantage, by an easy mode, perfectly simple in its operation, and *burdensome to no one*, of repaying Mr. ROBERTS for his valuable discovery; and preventing an application to the government for a money grant. Simple, however, and reasonable as it was, Mr. PARTRIDGE stated in his official reply to the proposal, that it appeared to the Committee to be "*impracticable;* and besides, *too expensive.*" Here was evidence, Mr. ROBERTS does not hesitate to assert, that the gentlemen who formed the Committee on that occasion (and who, Mr. PARTRIDGE says, *unanimously* came to the resolution to reject Mr. R.'s offer), had predetermined to resist the application of his discovery.

Having rejected this *specific* proposal, the Committee, by their organ Mr. PARTRIDGE, make an indefinite proposal of their own, in the following words:—"the Committee propose, *instead*, that the utility of Mr. ROBERTS's process should be carefully investigated by a Committee, to consist of Dr. BIRKBECK, Dr. SOMERVILLE, and the members of the Committee of Teachers, viz.—Mr. GRAINGER, Mr. LANE, Mr. QUAIN, and Mr. PARTRIDGE. Should the results prove satisfactory, the Committee of Teachers pledge themselves, *in the name of the Schools of Anatomy* [observe the extent of the pledge, as showing how far the combination had reached], to recommend Mr. ROBERTS's Anti-septic to the government, as deserving encouragement and reward. And, in the event of that recommendation not receiving the attention of the Secretary of State, the Committee engage to use their best ex-

ertions with the Teachers, to bring Mr. ROBERTS's liquid into general use."

The document from which the above extraordinary proposal is extracted, is in the hand writing, as already intimated, of Mr. PARTRIDGE of King's College. Mr. ROBERTS had devoted two years of his life to the perfecting of his discovery; and having perfected it, he had devoted nine months more to establish his claims with the profession and the public. In addition to a series of minor experiments, which the Medical Teachers had witnessed and pronounced a decisive opinion upon, Mr. ROBERTS had, during the months of July, August and September, and the early part of October—not in an obscure corner, but within the walls of the first Medical School in Great Britain—conducted a series of experiments on entire bodies, inviting the Medical Teachers to make the most elaborate and minute investigations they thought proper. The bodies (some of them during *three months)* were exhibited there, and, during certain hours of every day (generally from ten to four) whoever thought fit to come, might make what dissections he pleased. The room was open to all parties who presented themselves. There was not a Teacher in London of any eminence whatever, who was not aware of the experiments at Guy's, and the purpose for which they were made; and there was scarcely one to whom Mr. ROBERTS did not apply *personally*, inviting and soliciting him to examine for himself. Mr. STANLEY was invited, and did *not* come. Mr. BRANSBY COOPER came, and said the preparations were "beautiful." (Mr. ROBERTS, not anticipating the treatment he was destined to receive, unfortunately kept no book for visitors to record their names). Mr. QUAIN came, bringing a friend with him, and expressed himself perfectly satisfied. Mr. PARTRIDGE came, bringing a friend with him, and expressed himself perfectly satisfied. Mr. MACKMURDO came, and his two certificates, written in

consequence,* have been referred to. Mr. SKEY, being invited, declined to come on the ground that he was already perfectly satisfied. The late SIR A. COOPER was specially invited, when passing near the room; but having some strangers with him, excused himself. Mr. TUSON, the principal Teacher of Anatomy at Middlesex Hospital, was *twice* solicited to come; but excused himself on account of engagements. Sir BENJAMIN BRODIE was invited more than once. These invitations, be it remembered, were not to see and examine parts of bodies, but entire bodies, and this not at any private residence, but WITHIN THE WALLS OF GUY'S HOSPITAL. In these, and previous exhibitions, and pacings to and fro, nine months of valuable time had been expended. Now let us look back, to the proposal of the Anatomical Committee, through their organ, Mr. Secretary PARTRIDGE. But first, a word or two with that gentleman, requesting the reader to have the kindness, before we proceed, to refresh his memory, by turning to the Joint Certificate,† to which Mr. PARTRIDGE is a party, and to the separate certificate which he afterwards gave.‡ And now for the particular occurrence to which Mr. Secretary PARTRIDGE'S attention is solicited.

In consequence of an observation which dropt from that gentleman one day, when he did Mr. ROBERTS the honor to to call upon him at his house, namely, that he (Mr. P.) was desirous of being convinced that animal substances preserved by the process in question, did not require constant attention; an arrangement was made that Mr. ROBERTS should send an amputated limb, and various parts of viscera, to King's College, there to remain, *sealed up* in a box, for ten days. This was done, and at the end of that time, Mr. PARTRIDGE and

* See Appendix (L. and M.)

† See Appendix (B.)

‡ See Appendix (G.)

four or five other gentlemen opened the box, in the dissecting room of King's College, (in Mr. R.'s presence,) and acknowledged that the specimens were in the best possible condition. As we have stated, Mr. PARTRIDGE (afterwards) visited Guy's Hospital, and expressed himself perfectly satisfied with what he there saw: that being an exhibition of *entire* bodies.

It is difficult to conceive how, under such circumstances—knowing all he did—Mr. PARTRIDGE, or any gentleman so situated, could be the organ of such a proposal. Mr. PARTRIDGE *was*, however, and the discoverer of the process is truly grateful for the document which Mr. P. has thus supplied; for when *dates* are examined, they show beyond all contradiction, that the pretence set up by Mr. HARRISON and Mr. STANLEY, and re-echoed by Sir BENJAMIN BRODIE, has no foundation upon which to rest. Can any man who reads that proposal, and sees that the Committee are there ready to pledge themselves for *all* the Anatomical Schools of London (for they make no exception), believe that the experiments just concluded at Guy's (the principal ones), could be impeached? Is it not clear, that at that moment, when the facts were recent, *no one dared to asperse the process*, or openly assert, that in any one particular it had failed?

Farther than this, when Mr. ROBERTS in reply challenged them, (by letter, on the 24th of October, 1836,) to produce, in writing, some tangible charge of failure, if they had any such to allege; and again (on the 26th of the same month) distinctly repeated his challenge, demanding an open investigation, and a regular and strict inquiry into the past, if they had any thing to bring forward; they never from that time to this, have taken the slightest notice of either of those challenges! What is the inevitable conclusion?—certainly this; that they had nothing whatever to allege.

But the Committee, as if all the past was to go for nothing, and in spite of the accumulation of evidence, proposed a fresh series of experiments, suggesting five umpires; with the certainty that the first upon the list (Dr. BIRKBECK) could not attend in consequence of his professional and other avocations; and with the knowledge that Dr. SOMERVILLE was, for certain reasons, diametrically opposed to Mr. ROBERTS's claims, after being convinced that they were clearly established; for if he had not been so opposed, he never would have issued the circular he did, inviting a conference with a view to an *increased supply of bodies*, when the Anti-septic process presented a remedy for all the difficulties upon which he laid stress, when he called upon them to unite *their* exertions to *his*.

But monstrous as was the proposition, did Mr. ROBERTS decline it? No—he told the Committee by a letter dated October 25th, 1836, that he was ready to enter upon a fresh series of experiments, with this one proviso, namely, that he should be remunerated for his time.

All that Mr. ROBERTS had hitherto done had been at his own expence, including the sacrifice of two years and nine months of his time.

This condition, if it had been acceded to, might probably have cost the Teachers of Anatomy, £5 a-piece; and upon that proposition they broke off the negociation. As it is quite possible that mis-representation may hereafter arise out of these transactions, it has been thought advisable to go into a statement of these particulars. Mr. PARTRIDGE's communication of the 20th of October, 1836, is printed at length in the Appendix, and a more valuable document, whatever might have been the motive that gave rise to it, can hardly be conceived. It is one which Mr. HARRISON can never get over, if he were to live to the age of Methuselah.

Mr. ROBERTS cannot leave this subject of the conduct of

the Anatomical Committee without saying a word or two to Mr. STANLEY. "You, Mr. STANLEY, were the first chairman of the Anatomical Committee; its chairman when that committee held correspondence with the discoverer of the Anti-septic process. That committee made three written communications, the first (which is printed in the Appendix to this Appeal) is dated, October 20th, 1836, the second is dated October 25th, and the third is dated November 21st, all in that year. In the beginning of that October Mr. ROBERTS had concluded his public experiments at Guy's Hospital, *they being the last he ever made.* The committee in that correspondence never insinuated, or hinted at, an instance of even partial failure in any one of the preparations, though twice challenged to do so, if in the power of any member of the association.

Now, then, Mr. STANLEY! explain to the world, how it was that, after all the experiments had been completed, and the last and most important preparations had been exhibited during the months of July, August, and September in that year (1836), the Anatomical Committee, and you its chairman, in the months of October and November, of that same year, had not a syllable of fault to allege, and yet, that six years after, with nothing fresh by any possibility to rest upon, you have told SIR BENJAMIN BRODIE, that "the whole experiment was a complete failure." Account for that, Mr. STANLEY; justify that conduct, if you can, or stand convicted in the face of the honorable profession to which you belong, and the world, of having acted a part which no honourable man would have acted.

To SIR BENJAMIN BRODIE, who has lent himself to do a great wrong, Mr. ROBERTS, at present, makes no appeal. If he *is* the high minded man SIR JAMES GRAHAM has described him to be, he will, now that the facts of the case are before the public, hasten, of his own accord, to *repair* the

wrong. If there is a spark of honor in his breast, he will do it.

SIR JAMES GRAHAM, as is evident from his speech, has trusted to testimony given by Mr. HARRISON, Mr. STANLEY, and SIR BENJAMIN BRODIE.* The mischief SIR JAMES has done, he also can repair. The effect of his speech, for the time, upon Mr. HARDY, was to *paralyze* that gentleman. "He (Mr. HARDY) was not aware that the facts detailed in the petition . . . had been the subject of previous consideration, or he would not have urged them again upon the notice of the House and the Government." Such was the effect of statements, confidently made by the Secretary of State, but *which had not the shadow of a foundation in truth.*

We are now in a position to return to the question "Why is that understanding not binding upon Her Majesty's Government, which, between ordinary parties, would have been regarded in the light of a special contract?"

The answer is, that several of the senior teachers of Anatomy in London, have imagined that their individual interests would be affected by the introduction of an Anti-septic process. *Its very completeness has but increased their apprehensions that it might lessen their profits:* they have accordingly done all in their power to disparage the invention; some of them contradicting their deliberately recorded opinions. In that predicament they stand. They have had access to ministers of state, and have maligned the invention; or have set on such dependents as BROWELL, the House Steward of Guy's, to assert what they had not the courage to allege themselves.

Mr. ROBERTS is perfectly aware of some of the proceedings of two young men named COCK and HILTON, who happen to be demonstrators at Guy's Hospital, in this matter. These aspirants to hospital practice and promotion (prompted no

* See the Report of Sir James Graham's speech.

doubt by older heads), have made themselves busy in *privately* disparaging Mr. ROBERTS's discovery. Mr. R. believes he makes no mistake when he says, that a Mr. COCK addressed a letter to the BISHOP of EXETER, somewhere about the time that Mr. BROWELL, the House Steward of Guy's Hospital, sought notoriety in a similar way; and that that letter was indorsed by Mr. ASTON KEY, who gave Mr. COCK a character, as SIR ASTLEY COOPER, on a similar occasion, had done in the case of Mr. DAVIS, the dissecting porter of Guy's. Mr. ROBERTS also believes that he makes no mistake when he says, that calling one day on LORD BROUGHAM, he (Mr. R.) nearly trod upon the heels of a Mr. HILTON. LORD BROUGHAM had at that time presented a petition for Mr. ROBERTS to the House of Lords, of which circumstance the Treasurer of Guy's Hospital was no doubt aware. Mr. R. takes this opportunity of thanking LORD BROUGHAM for his plain outspeaking upon the occasion of his presenting a second petition for him, when he turned to LORD MELBOURNE, and told him that if he did not bring this matter to a satisfactory termination, he "*would put it in such a position that his Lordship could not resist it.*"

The circumstances are rather remarkable, that Mr. COCK, a Student of Anatomy, should have a communication to make to a Reverend Prelate; and that Mr. HILTON should have travelled so far westward as Grafton-street. In Mr. ROBERTS's letter addressed to SIR JAMES GRAHAM on the 25th of October, 1842, he had occasion to go into some details of occurrences at Guy's Hospital, in the months of July, August, and September, 1836. In that narrative two young men are mentioned as acting rather a conspicuous part, and so attracting Mr. R's. attention, during the time he was exhibiting his preparations at Guy's, that as a matter of precaution, he got Mr. MACKMURDO and Dr. TODD to pay very particular attention to the state of his preparations ex-

hibited there during the months above enumerated. To the certificates which those gentlemen gave in consequence of being prevailed upon to witness the experiments (and which are inserted in the letter to SIR JAMES GRAHAM above alluded to), Mr. ROBERTS refers those two young men; and if his memory serves him, their names were identical, "COCK" and "HILTON." The coincidence, to say the least, is not a little remarkable.

Before we close this Appeal, some reference is necessary to the petition which Mr. HARDY presented to the House of Commons last session, and on which he founded his motion already referred to. In that petition Mr. ROBERTS drew attention to the fact, that between October 1839 and July 1841, 354 interments of dissected bodies [Mr. R. should have said, the *remains* of dissected bodies] had been buried in a piece of unconsecrated ground, at Mile End, called Globe Fields; an undertaker's man, dressed out as a clergyman of the Established Church, having been employed to read the Burial Service over the shells deposited there, and that the Inspector had taken that man's certificate of burial as the *legal* certificate.

Mr. ROBERTS also in that petition drew attention to the fact that, while certain privileged undertakers had been charging Teachers of Anatomy from 42s. to 85s. each shell, for burial, &c., the remains of dissected bodies had been interred in Globe Fields for 6s. and 7s. 6d. each.

The only other point in the petition which may require any farther explanation is, perhaps, the reference it contains to a paper, of which Mr. WARBURTON availed himself in his place in the House of Commons, on the 3rd. of April, 1840. The paper was a hand-bill which Mr. ROBERTS had circulated among Parish Boards, in consequence of finding that a combination of Medical Teachers, regarding only their private interests, had been formed against him; and *this* under the

most disgraceful circumstances, considering their previous recorded opinions in favour of his process and their numerous and reiterated pledges of support.

Under these circumstances it was natural for Mr. ROBERTS to look elsewhere for assistance, and he was led to address the Parish Boards, upon the abuses which were perpetrated under the existing system, *with a view to their correction by the instrumentality of his invention.*

In his appeal to these Boards, he alluded to the committee or association of teachers which Dr. SOMERVILLE, the Inspector of Anatomy, had formed for the purpose of inducing Parish Officers and Guardians of the poor, to grant an increased supply of pauper bodies for dissection; and in strong terms denounced the wilful waste that was made of them; the loss of life among the students in consequence of their coming in contact with infectious bodies; and the hindrances thrown in the way of Anatomical Science, by mercenary practitioners.

That committee had been formed in October, 1836, and it was not until the July following, and when their plans had been fully developed, that Mr. ROBERTS published his Appeal to the Parish Boards.

A copy of the hand-bill in question was put into the hands of Mr. WARBURTON by Mr. ROBERTS in the month of July, 1837, the Anatomical Committee having been in existence nine months. The hand-bill produced in his mind some irritation, which was quickly removed by explanations on the part of Mr. ROBERTS, and also by the friendly interference of SIR GEORGE SINCLAIR, in a letter dated September 18th, 1837,* who was well aware how Mr. ROBERTS had been goaded. The best of understanding, to all appearance, followed; so much so, that in November, 1837, four months after Mr. WARBURTON had been put in possession of the

* See Appendix (Q).

hand-bill, he got from Mr. ROBERTS the details of his invention, *in the presence of Sir George Sinclair;* as the sole condition upon which he would make a report thereon to the government. In January, 1838, six months after the hand-bill had been in his possession, Mr. WARBURTON made his favourable report to the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and on the 9th of April, 1838, being *nine months* after he knew of the hand-bill, he wrote the only letter he ever addressed to Mr. ROBERTS, containing an expression of *regret* ("I am very sorry)", that Mr. RICE had transmitted, *unknown to him,* all Mr. ROBERTS's papers to LORD JOHN RUSSELL; and it is in that letter that Mr. WARBURTON uses those remarkable words, "I SHOULD CONJECTURE THAT IT IS THE REPRESENTATIONS OF GENTLEMEN WHO ARE OPPOSED TO SUMMER TEACHING THAT HAVE PREVAILED AGAINST YOU."

Little did Mr. ROBERTS, at that moment, suspect that Mr. WARBURTON, whom SIR GEORGE SINCLAIR, in the integrity of his heart, had described (see his letter, April 4th, 1837)* as a "highly honourable," and "a very *just* man," as well as "a very influential man," whose authority would have great weight, both with the government and with the House of Commons, had been *acting the part of a traitor.* That at that time he had so acted, no reasonable man can doubt when he learns that in 1840, Mr. ROBERTS having petitioned for a Committee of the House of Commons to inquire into his case, in connexion with the mal-administration of the Anatomy Act, Mr. WARBURTON took an opportunity of publicly reading to the House the hand-bill in question, saying that the publication of that paper had deprived Mr. ROBERTS of all claim to sympathy. "Yes," said that Honourable Member, "were such a man to discover the philosopher's stone, he would not be entitled to consideration."

* Appendix (P.)

As Mr. ROBERTS has commented upon this transaction in a petition, in which farther particulars are given, he refers to that document, rather than repeat what he has there said; but he believes that no English senator, from the time that parliaments were first summoned to the present hour, ever voluntarily placed himself in so disgraceful a predicament. By *dates* let Mr. WARBURTON be judged.

The first document attached to the "Appeal," is the speech of SIR JAMES GRAHAM, on the 7th of July, 1842 (see Report reprinted from the Times Newspaper), when Mr. HARDY made his motion "to take into consideration the petition of WILLIAM ROBERTS on the Anatomy Act, and to move for a Committee to inquire into and report on the working thereof, and to recommend, if necessary, amendments of the same".

A few passages in SIR JAMES GRAHAM'S speech require comment here: they are as follows:—

1. Referring to the time of the passing of the Anatomy Bill, SIR JAMES said, "He would inform his honorable and learned friend that so long ago as that time Mr. WARBURTON was in communication with the inventor upon the subject."

Remark:—SIR JAMES GRAHAM has been mis-informed. Instead of Mr. WARBURTON being in communication with the inventor in 1832, as that statement implies, he was not in communication with him until 1836. The point, however, is of no importance, except as showing that SIR JAMESGRAHAM was speaking confidently upon *incorrect* information.

2. "He (SIR JAMES GRAHAM) could not dissemble from the House, that two or three of the enactments of the Anatomy Act had not been complied with."

Remark:—The admission is valuable, as far as it goes; but it would have been more so if SIR JAMES had specified the clauses to which he referred. It is quite possible that the non-observance of a *single clause*, might render the whole of

an Act of Parliament a dead letter. The Anatomy Act had been the law of the land for nearly ten years; and the Secretary of State confesses that during the whole of that time, some of the enactments had not been complied with. The truth is, as Mr. ROBERTS has often asserted, that the Anatomy Bill of 1832, was *based on fraud*, and that *none* of its *essential* clauses have been complied with. It has only been Mr. ROBERTS's *representations* that have drawn from the public authorities the present admission.

3. "One (inspector) only had been nominated; consequently the expence of the whole establishment was less than if three had been appointed; *while he believed the duty was better fulfilled, than it would be if three Inspectors were engaged.*"

Remark:—If the late Inspector, Dr. SOMERVILLE, had so well performed his duty as this statement implies, why has he been unceremoniously dismissed, and *two* Inspectors appointed in his place?

4. As to the quarterly returns, "He had in his office distinct proofs that his predecessor had from time to time *watched the working of the Act*; therefore it had not been a dead letter."

Remark:—Some allowance, we suppose, must here be made for the tendency there is in official personages to speak with a certain degree of courtesy of each other's conduct in high departments of the state. But it is a little unfortunate that the two assertions are hard to reconcile; namely, that SIR JAMES GRAHAM'S predecessors (meaning, of course the LORDS MELBOURNE, RUSSELL, and NORMANBY, who had successively presided over the Home Department during nearly the whole period which had elapsed since the passing of the Anatomy Act in 1832) had so watched the working of it, that it had not been a dead letter, while, almost in the same breath, he had to admit that two or three of its clauses had not been

complied with. Mr. ROBERTS has constantly maintained that the Burial Clauses have been contravened, and as they are the fundamental clauses of the Act; the Act itself, has, to all intents and purposes, been a *dead letter*. It is no proof to the contrary that the Inspector has pocketed large emoluments, or that he has affected to go through a certain routine of duty in his capacity of Receiver General of Burial Certificates. Ten years have elapsed, and the main clauses by which the Act has obtained a certain degree of credit with the public, have never been enforced; the broad admission is at last made that "*two* or *three* clauses have not been complied with." What then was that vigilance good for, that could allow of this? In any inferior department of the state *such* vigilance (if that is the term by which such conduct is to be designated), would not have been tolerated for a single day.

5. "The allegations respecting the burial of bodies were submitted by himself to a Commission . . . . ; and all the abuses complained of were checked; Dr. SOMERVILLE being warned of them, and desired to prevent their recurrence."

Remark:—That commission took most of its information respecting alleged abuses relating to bodies obtained from Marylebone Workhouse from two gentlemen, who were mainly indebted for their knowledge of the circumstances which they narrated, to Mr. ROBERTS; a much fuller statement of abuses could have been made by him, but the commission passed him over as a witness, and took the evidence at *second hand*. They probably acted according to their instructions. But it is a curious fact, that though two commissions have now sat, mainly in consequence of abuses alleged by Mr. ROBERTS; in neither instance has he been allowed to give his testimony, though anxious so to do! SIR JAMES admits that *all* the abuses complained of, were *justly* complained of, for he states that they had *all* been *checked*. Dr. SOMERVILLE, he

says, had been warned of them, and desired to prevent their recurrence. Dr. SOMERVILLE has, since that time, been *dismissed*. What is the natural conclusion? that the warning had not been taken.

But whether that gentleman owes his dismissal to not having taken that warning, or whether there have been *other* grounds for his dismissal,—leaving that point, about which Mr. ROBERTS has no knowledge, he boldly asserts that, the Act is, at this time, a *dead letter*, and will continue so to be until an entire change of system is adopted. There has never been a *bonâ fide* compliance with the Act, and it was never intended that there should be.

6. "All the provisions of the Act were," he believed, "most carefully attended to."

Remarks:—Mr. ROBERTS will content himself with saying, that SIR JAMES GRAHAM is altogether in error. Let him but grant an open Commission, or a Committee, and SIR JAMES will soon find that the reverse of this is the fact.

7. "Having stated the substance of the Report of the second Commission, he hoped the House would not press for its production."

Remark:—The DUKE of WELLINGTON, in the House of Lords, has given a pledge to LORD STANHOPE, that it shall be produced.

8. "Passing from the Anatomy Bill, he would now come to the prayer of the petition, which he believed to be, *under the guise of an attempt* to carry out more effectively the objects of that Bill, an application for an altered discovery of national importance. (Hear, hear.)"

Remark:—This is hard measure, SIR JAMES! The inventor had gone to the Government, through Mr. WARBURTON, in 1836, *at the suggestion of the* Anatomical teachers (see the *Joint Certificate*, signed by the ten principal teachers of Anatomy). Mr. ROBERTS had also, in that very petition

upon which SIR JAMES is commenting, stated that HE HAD PUT HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT IN POSSESSION OF A MOST IMPORTANT DISCOVERY, IN CONFIDENT RELIANCE UPON ITS HONOR." What did this mean? Was it not sufficiently intelligible? Was there in this any *guise* attempted? *Would the House of Commons, have received a petition for a Money Grant, if it had been presented* without its having obtained the concurrence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer? Certainly not. What did "reliance upon the honor of Her Majesty's Government refer to, but to *the fulfilment of a pecuniary obligation?*"

9. "If Mr. ROBERTS, had made such a discovery as he had described, he would be entitled to a reward."

Remark:—"If" so and so:—let any impartial man peruse the documents contained in the Appendix, and then say, whether Mr. R. has, or has not, fully established his case.

10. "His Hon. friend had mentioned a certificate which was *signed in* 1836 *by many eminent men,* who stated that from what they saw, it was a discovery of great importance, and most useful to society."

Remark:—Those eminent men were *ten* in number; and SIR JAMES GRAHAM finds *one* of them, who is prepared to recant his opinions not upon the testimony of his own senses; but upon the testimony of other persons, namely, Mr. HARRISON, the Treasurer of Guy's Hospital, and Mr. STANLEY, of St. Bartholomew's. And when the matter comes to be farther sifted, it appears that neither of these gentlemen speaks from the evidence of his own senses; and thus the unshaken, and to this hour the unimpeached, testimony of SIR ASTLEY COOPER, of his nephew Mr. BRANSBY COOPER, of Mr. JOSEPH HENRY GREEN, of Mr. GILBERT MACKMURDO, of Dr. TODD, of Mr. RICHARD PARTRIDGE, of Mr. R. O. GRAINGER, and of Mr. F. SKEY; to say nothing of that of Dr. SOMERVILLE, Dr. BIRKBECK, and Mr. WAR-

BURTON, is to go for nothing, because SIR BENJAMIN BRODIE, *on hearsay report alone*, thinks fit to retract his opinions! The unfairness of thus dismissing his claims, Mr. ROBERTS has fully shown in his letter to SIR JAMES GRAHAM, dated October 25, 1842, to which he begs to refer his readers.

11. "His honourable friend also said, that the teachers of Anatomy were prejudiced against Mr. ROBERTS, and wished to continue the present system, for the sake of obtaining pupils. Why, to such a man as SIR BENJAMIN BRODIE, it must be a positive sacrifice to be withdrawn from his professional business with patients; but he was a man who disregarded personal advantages in his zeal for the promotion and improvement of that science which he adorned. (Hear, hear.)"

Remark:—The late SIR ASTLEY COOPER, once told Mr. ROBERTS, who had happened to find him scraping a human bone, that he made a rule of *daily* dissecting: to keep his hand in, no doubt, and refresh his memory. SIR BENJAMIN BRODIE, may possibly find it convenient to do the same. But, however that may be, and though SIR BENJAMIN may be as indifferent to personal advantage as SIR JAMES GRAHAM represents him to be, it is nevertheless certain, that owing to the advantages which SIR BENJAMIN BRODIE has enjoyed in connexion with hospital practice, he is supposed to pocket £15,000 a-year; and there are persons who estimate the annual value of his practice as high as £20,000. The result of adopting the Anti-septic process would be, to give a large increase of Anatomical knowledge to Medical Students, the consequence of which would be, that fees would be in some instances a little more moderate, and the *larger ones* would be more widely distributed among the profession. SIR BENJAMIN BRODIE perfectly understands how such a breaking down of monopoly might affect existing interests. SIR ASTLEY COOPER—knew what it was to take *a Thousand Pounds at a time*.

12. Sir James Graham, depending implicitly upon his informant Sir Benjamin Brodie, makes certain incorrect statements respecting the College of Surgeons. Mr. Roberts in his letter to Sir James Graham, dated October 25, 1842, has said all that can be necessary upon that head.

13. Sir James Graham then read an extract of a letter he had received from Sir Benjamin Brodie, to this effect: —"Sir Astley Cooper and myself signed a paper which you have seen, after examining a body which Mr. Roberts said had been unburied some time. But subsequently it appeared that the whole experiment was a complete failure". Sir James then proceeded thus:—"This was the testimony given on the authority of Mr. Harrison, the Treasurer of Guy's Hospital, and Mr. Stanley."

Remark:—Mr. Roberts has only to repeat, that this statement of failure is fully met in the letter to Sir James Graham, of the 25th of October, and that Mr. Harrison's and Mr. Stanley's testimony in the matter, is there shown to be *utterly worthless.*

14. "Sir Benjamin Brodie," says Sir James Graham, "went on to state that the *same* discovery had been made in France."

Remark:—The certificates show that Mr. Roberts's process was different, and superior to any with which the Anatomical Teachers were previously acquainted. The communication (a strictly confidential one) was made to Mr. Warburton, as far back as November 1837. Nearly five years, therefore, have passed over since, and this is the first time such an assertion has ever been made. Mr. Roberts does not hesitate to give it the most direct contradiction. He calls upon Sir Benjamin Brodie, for the *proof* of this bold assertion of his.

15. Sir James Graham proceeds to say that Sir Benjamin Brodie added in his communication, these words:—

"However useful it may be, it can never supersede the necessity of dissection."

Remark:—Nor did Mr. ROBERTS ever even *dream* of its doing so; or any one else. One of the advantages he has uniformly insisted upon, is that an Anti-septic process which keeps the parts in a fresh and moist condition, would afford the means of more minute dissection. In that opinion he is *fully* confirmed by Mr. J. H. GREEN.

A few days after SIR JAMES GRAHAM had delivered this speech,* Mr. ROBERTS wrote to him, complaining of the statements he had made upon the authority of SIR BENJAMIN BRODIE, Mr. STANLEY, and Mr. HARRISON, and informing him that he (Mr. ROBERTS) was in possession of a mass of documentary evidence that would prove the fallacy of those statements. But that passing over that evidence, Mr. ROBERTS was prepared to preserve any number of bodies, and for any time Her Majesty's Government might require.

To that communication no answer was returned, and on making a second application along with a request for an order upon the Inspector for a supply of bodies, for a fresh series of experiments, Mr. ROBERTS received a reply† to the effect, that SIR JAMES GRAHAM must decline to interfere farther in the matter, and could not consent to give the order solicited.

Matters having been brought to this issue, Mr. ROBERTS thought that it was necessary to go, at some considerable length, into a statement of the leading points of his case, with the hope of convincing SIR JAMES GRAHAM, that by listening too exclusively to the representations of certain individuals, who had the advantage of free and confidential access to him, he had suffered himself to be seriously misled.‡

To that appeal, accompanied by numerous documents, Mr. ROBERTS received no reply.

* Dated September 21, 1842. † Dated July 15, 1842.

‡ See the letter dated 25th October, 1842.

On the 14th of December he addressed the second letter in the series now printed, introducing to SIR JAMES GRAHAM'S notice additional documents.

To that letter also, no answer was returned.

On the 4th of January, 1843, Mr. ROBERTS addressed his last letter, the third in this series, referring to the unacknowledged letters, and requesting to know whether, after the receipt of them, SIR JAMES GRAHAM'S former answer must be regarded *as final.*

In reply to this letter, Mr. ROBERTS received a note from SIR JAMES GRAHAM'S Secretary, stating that SIR JAMES GRAHAM saw no reason to alter the determination which he had before communicated. The consequence of that determination, is the present Appeal.

The discoverer of the Anti-septic Process, has now applied to three Secretaries of State in succession, namely LORD JOHN RUSSELL, LORD NORMANBY, and SIR JAMES GRAHAM, under circumstances which gave him the strongest claims upon Her Majesty's Government, and has, as the result of all his efforts, uniformly received as the final answer of each, the reply that they would not *farther interfere*; and this, though LORD MELBOURNE'S administration, through Mr. SPRING RICE then Chancellor of the Exchequer, had gone so far as to get possession of *the secret of the process*, on the plea of ascertaining that it was "*cheap, innocuous, and easy of application.*"

Had LORD JOHN RUSSELL, or LORD NORMANBY, given the countenance of Her Majesty's Government to the process, SIR JAMES GRAHAM would never have had to make the admission that two or three essential clauses of the Anatomy Act had remained inoperative during a period of ten years, nor to allow almost in so many words, that all the abuses of which Mr. ROBERTS has complained had existed. And with regard to any fresh prospects which may now be held out in reference

to the future, in the hope that if Parliaments continue to be accommodating, another ten years may be gained before their fallacy can be thoroughly exposed: they will be found to be utterly delusive.

In the Petition which Mr. ROBERTS presented to the House of Commons on the 29th of June, 1842, there is a point mentioned which it is necessary here to notice again, premising that there had been a Commission appointed in February, 1840, to inquire into the working of the Anatomy Act, and that the Commissioners entrusted with this duty were, Mr. WARBURTON (who figured as chairman); Mr. BENJAMIN HAWES, Member for Lambeth; and a Mr. GORE and a Mr. BYNG, neither of them Members of Parliament. In that petition Mr. ROBERTS made the following allegation:—"Your Petitioner applied to be examined before that Commission, to prove the abuses of which he was cognisant in its operation (meaning the Anatomy Act), but the Commissioners *refused* to allow him to give his evidence; and farther, that the said Commissioners closed their inquiry in March of the same year, but have not yet made a Report, though more than two years have elapsed." Lest this word "refused" should be cavilled at—though Mr. ROBERTS holds it to be substantially correct—he will take this opportunity of stating what actually did occur. A Mr. WILLIAM PAGE, dating his letter from the "Chambers of the London University, Somerset House," wrote Mr. ROBERTS word as follows:—

"MARCH 7, 1840.

"SIR,

"I am directed by the Commissioners for inquiring into the working of the Anatomy Act, to acquaint you that you must exercise your own discretion, whether or not you will present yourself for examination before the said Commissioners; and that should you so present yourself, they will

then inform you whether they consider that your evidence ought to be taken; and if so, on what day."

"I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
WILLIAM PAGE."

"To Mr. W. ROBERTS, &c. &c."

In about a week after, Mr. ROBERTS, not knowing when to attend, and they having made no appointment, addressed a second letter to the Commissioners, requesting to be examined; but to that letter received no reply. A member of the House of Commons, to whom these circumstances were subsequently stated, took an opportunity of mentioning the subject to one of the Commissioners, and was frankly told by that gentleman, that *they had made up their minds* not to receive Mr. ROBERTS's evidence. This was the natural consequence of the Commissioners having for their Chairman, a person who had an immediate interest in the continuance of the illegal working of the Act. How deeply interested Mr. WARBURTON was in suppressing that evidence, may be judged of by the fact, that the Anatomical School in which he had a pecuniary interest, had nearly doubled its number of Pupils from 1836 to 1838, and that the profit of those two years had averaged about £5000 per annum more than it would have done if the Anatomy Act had been properly drawn up, and legally and impartially worked. This £5000 a-year had been diverted and withdrawn chiefly from the private Schools. The favoured School alluded to has well nigh owed its existence, and certainly is mainly indebted for its prosperity, to the Anatomy Act, worked as it had been.

And now—to bring this appeal to a conclusion—the adoption of an available Anti-septic Process might be made to afford very great advantages to the Medical Profession, and

such as hitherto have been accessible to but few persons. If the Governors and Directors of Hospitals which have Anatomical Schools attached, are actuated by a wish to further Medical Science, they have the ready means, with the aid of an Anti-septic process, of very materially advancing it, by giving new and increased facilities for investigation, not only to *Students* of Anatomy, but to the established Practitioners all over the country. It would be an object not unworthy of the attention of the Legislature itself, to require of Anatomical Schools (availing themselves of the aids which an Anatomy Act affords them), that they should always, when their supply admitted, have two or three bodies skilfully dissected *kept ready for any regular and licensed practitioner to examine* during certain hours; that, in case he had any difficult operation to perform, he might, with the assistance of "light" and "touch" (points on which Mr. J. H. GREEN, as we have seen, deservedly lays such stress), bring back to his recollection even the minutest particular which it might be desirable for him to remember. For such scrutiny, the summer months would furnish special opportunities; the days would be long, affording more and better *light* than in the winter months, and the *touch* would be finer. It it obvious that upon sharing these advantages a great deal may depend. The skill, and certainty of hand, with which any operator can proceed, must depend upon his nice perception and accurate knowledge of the parts. There must be many operations, which, without such previous consideration and review of a subject, it would be rash to undertake. In the profession at large, there are doubtless many men of great natural talent, who would have been capable of performing the most difficult operations with distinguished success, had they been able to keep up a connexion with the Anatomical Schools; but who, for want of such ready opportunities as are here suggested (*based upon an Anti-septic Process*), are kept down in

their Profession, and unable to compete for the heavy fees which are daily distributed. It is quite clear that in the absence of such opportunities as it would then be in the power of every Anatomical School to give, a great proportion of Medical and Surgical talent must now remain undeveloped, and therefore lost to the public. The observation was not less striking than true, which one of the leading teachers of Anatomy dropt one day, in a casual conversation with the discoverer, namely, that an available Anti-septic Process (and his remark was directed to this very process) would advance Anatomical Science fifty years.

As Mr. ROBERTS is here addressing the Profession at large, and endeavouring to point out to the general practitioners how fine a field for their exertions an Anti-septic Process might be made the means of furnishing (if not through the medium of the Hospital Schools of Anatomy, at all events through that of the Private Schools, whose attention might be turned to the plan above suggested), he cannot let this opportunity pass without adverting to the state of Abdominal Surgery, and the little advance it has hitherto made. It is now nearly a quarter of a century since Dr. BLUNDELL, at that time Lecturer on Physiology and Midwifery at Guy's Hospital, pressed upon the attention of the profession to which he belongs, and of which he is one of the most distinguished ornaments, the study of Abdominal Surgery, suggesting several operations in that branch of the science not less important than Lithotomy, and expressing his confident belief that the time would come when such operations, in cases in which recovery is otherwise hopeless, would become nearly as common as those in Lithotomy. It is a fact strongly illustrative of the argument here pursued, that it is only very recently that the first successful operation in London, of the major kind, for the removal of the *ovarium*, has been performed; and that not by an Hospital Surgeon, but by a private

practitioner.* In this novel and highly important case, the weight of the *ovarium* removed exceeded 16lbs.

Nor would the advantages afforded to Anatomical Students by an available Anti-septic Process, be less than those afforded to Medical Practitioners. The entire amount of knowledge and experience which, with its assistance, students of Anatomy would be enabled to carry away, would be very greatly increased. At a trifling expense, they would have "a pure atmosphere in the Anatomical Schools, and bodies in a fresh, moist and inoffensive state," to work upon; health and comfort would be secured, and the danger to life, now not inconsiderable, would be entirely got rid of. Is there any pupil who would hesitate, if the question were properly put to him, to pay 10s. per annum for these advantages alone, to say nothing of those arising from the permanence and stability of the parts dissected, and the opportunity afforded for longer and more minute dissection, and for retracing all he had done in previous days' dissections? Add to this the advantages of *summer* dissection, when light and touch, of such importance to him, would be had in perfection—let but these considerations be allowed to have their due weight, and where is the Student of Anatomy, who would not be far more than remunerated for so trifling a charge, if he looks no farther than to passing through his noviciate? But having done this, let him contemplate his chances of success in his future career; and the opportunities thus presented to him, of taking rank in the highest grade of his profession, *in whatever clime his lot may be cast* (for the Anti-septic Process would come to his aid even in the East or West Indies); and then let him say, whether the discoverer of this process has made an unreasonable demand upon his purse, through the medium of the Anatomical Teachers, or whether, failing to obtain their

* Mr. WALNE, of Guilford Street, Russell Square.

co-operation, he has made an undue demand upon the public purse? Mr. ROBERTS is confident medical students will feel that he has not been unreasonable in either of his propositions. It is only by a thorough knowledge of their profession, that they can ever hope to become competitors for the grand prizes which have been already alluded to.

Having addressed this part of his appeal chiefly to Students, Mr. ROBERTS is reminded of another view of the subject, which he feels entitled to urge: namely, that to the Anatomical Teachers, in the first instance, and secondly to Her Majesty's Ministers, and all parties who have it in their power to further the introduction of an Anti-septic Process (available for the preservation of human bodies), and who resist it, a very weighty responsibility attaches. They are justly chargeable with, and accountable for, every individual life that is sacrificed by pursuing the present wasteful system, by means of which several valuable lives are annually sacrificed through Students having to dissect (at no inconsiderable cost, be it observed, to themselves and their friends), human bodies, some of them in an infectious state even at the very time they are brought into the Anatomical Schools; or, if not, being soon, by the warmth and closeness of the atmosphere, or by other causes, in a high state of decomposition. These are points not to be overlooked. The Teachers of Anatomy owe it to the Students, whose money they take, that every thing that is practicable should be done to promote their comfort and their health, and to prevent the chance, or rather the certainty (judging from the past) of the most distressing and fatal occurrences. It is obvious, that if MR. ROBERTS's secret were to be given to the public—which neither the Medical Profession nor the public have a right to call for—but little progress towards improvement would be made, while those who have the control and management of the Anatomical Schools are, for their

own selfish purposes, combined against, and determined to resist, the introduction of his process.

The Members of the Anatomical Committee—we beg the attention of their chairman, Mr. STANLEY, once more—the members of that Committee who with him are opposed to the introduction of an Anti-septic Process into the Schools of Anatomy, are in the situation of certain men of Ephesus, who made golden shrines for Diana in days of old. A shrewd fellow among them, named Demetrius, foreseeing how their interest was likely to be affected by the preaching of a stranger who had suddenly appeared among them, "called together the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth."

It would be well if these craftmen of *our* times, who have been *"called together"* under very similar circumstances, had, along with their "craft," as much honesty as the men of Ephesus. They might then boast of their devotion to the interests of Science, and to the public interests, as gravely, and as unrebuked, as did those men of Ephesus, of their profound attachment to the temple of the great goddess Diana, and the image which came down from Jupiter.

As the Anatomical Committee have resisted the introduction of an available Anti-septic Process, while, according to the statement of their Secretary, Mr. PARTRIDGE, the Schools in 1836 were not supplied with above one half the number of bodies required for dissection during the winter [at that time they had among them about 600 bodies], and as, since that time, the scarcity has not diminished, the Legislature will, before long, in all probability, be called upon to make great alterations in the Anatomy Law.

When the committee of Anatomical Teachers issued one of their Circulars (in December, 1837), they took occasion to remark therein, upon the fact of the Anatomy Act not

rendering it "*compulsory* on the parishes, or other sources of supply, to give up the unclaimed bodies for the purposes of dissection." There cannot be a doubt entertained that some of the members of that body would wish the Legislature to *make it compulsory*. We trust, however, the Legislature will be better advised; for that discretionary power of not giving up unclaimed bodies, has been the only check upon the Schools of Anatomy, and is likely to continue so to be. The circular issued by the recently appointed Inspectors, bearing date November 18, 1842, and addressed to the Teachers of Anatomy, shows in how salutary a way this discretion vested in Parish Boards, has operated. It appears that "many of the Parish authorities" have demurred to the lengthened period during which bodies have remained unburied, "as a serious ground of objection to the removal of the unclaimed bodies of paupers to the Schools." So say the new Inspectors in their circular of November.

They also say, and the attention of the public is especially solicited to the passage—"It must be obviously an essential condition to the success of any measures for the improvement of the hitherto inadequate supply of bodies for the Metropolitan Schools, that the wishes of the Parochial Authorities should be consulted so far as may be found consistent with the objects of the Anatomy Act, *and the greatest care taken to avoid to the utmost, all causes of offence to their feelings, or even to their prejudices.*"

After pointing out a number of abuses, and urging the necessity of guarding against them "with the greatest care;" the Inspectors go on to say, that it is by the vigilant superintendence of the Teachers these objects can be best attained; and they call attention to the great evils which might result "*from any dereliction or carelessness on the part of* the Teachers of a single School." They conclude by speaking of the

system, as one "affecting various and often irreconcilable interests, and which must necessarily be impeded by the prejudices of many, and by the APATHY *of nearly all, whose feelings, or more immediate interests, are not involved.*"

We return, therefore, to the point from which we set out, that the discretion now vested in the Parochial Authorities, inadequate as in many instances it may have proved, is the only check upon which any dependence can be placed in restraining abuses in these matters. The Anatomical Teachers are the last persons to be trusted: make it *compulsory* upon Parish Boards to give up all unclaimed pauper bodies to them; and abuses which have hitherto had no check but in those Boards, and in the efforts of one solitary individual besides, will soon be rampant; and a greater waste of human bodies than has ever yet occurred will be the consequence.

If the Legislature really wishes to check abuses,—rather than diminish, let them increase the power of the Parish Authorities, in reference to unclaimed bodies; and let all bodies, which they give up for "anatomical *examination*," return to them in such a state that identity is traceable; let it be the duty of the parish authorities, to have every such shell reopened before interment, to see that no tricks have been played, and then let the funeral be decently and reverently conducted. If exceptions must be made, let those exceptions be confined to the bodies of persons dying in jails, hulks, and penitentiaries, and whose crimes have amounted to felony. But the innocent pauper, including the widow and the orphan; let their funerals, as we have before suggested, proceed direct from the poor-house to the burial-ground of the parish, so that some who have seen and known the deceased in their days of destitution and sorrow, may have an opportunity of paying the last attentions to their remains, and dropping a tear over their grave; with the prospect, that if it should ever be their fate to die in a workhouse, some kin-

dred spirits may do the same kind offices for them. The practice now very generally adopted, is to convey the remains of paupers, *unattended by mourners*, from the School of Anatomy, to some obscure and private burial-ground, *as a temporary* deposit: they have been removed—half-a-dozen shells at a time, perhaps—as unceremoniously as so many bales of goods to a warehouse, thence to be again removed at the first convenient opportunity. Let but the Parish Boards have the powers here suggested, and the expence of Inspectors may be entirely saved to the country; unless indeed these officials are retained simply to regulate the distribution; for which purpose, however, such costly machinery cannot be requisite.

It is certain that up to the present hour no security has existed for the legal fulfilment of the burial clauses of the Anatomy Act; nor would any amended Act, in the absence of an available anti-septic process, meet the difficulty. To render any such Act operative and binding, there must be the ready means of preserving the evidence of identity. As matters are now conducted, it would not be possible—if legal inquiry were instituted—to satisfy the Courts of Westminster or Guildhall, that the Act had been fulfilled; no, not in one case in 500. In an immense majority of cases, though funeral rites are performed, *there is no burial of the body*, if words, as we have already said, have any definitive meaning. And this and every other evil and abuse arising out of the rejection of a preservative process, are to be tolerated and endured because certain Anatomical Teachers, supported by other parties who have pecuniary interests involved, and some of whom have occupied the highest positions in the state, are banded together to resist a discovery, of whose merits they are thoroughly convinced, but which they are apprehensive will curtail their gains, and throw open a monopoly! The interests of the profession at large, and the public interests, including those of science, are to be sacrificed

to put a few additional fees into their pockets! Will public opinion allow of this?

Of the letters to the Secretary of State which follow this Appeal, and of the documents thrown together in the Appendix, it is necessary, in conclusion, to say a word. The former are essential to the unravelling of the plot—the conspiracy it may be called—which has existed to suppress a discovery of great public utility; and the latter form a chain of evidence in which no single link is wanting.

Mr. ROBERTS has to apologise for the length to which this pamphlet has run; but it has been unavoidable. His opponents had rendered it necessary that he should state the whole of his case, and explain fully every transaction connected with his proceedings in this affair. The task imposed upon him he has endeavoured faithfully and uprightly to execute, and to the Profession and the Public he now respectfully but confidently appeals.

THREE LETTERS TO SIR JAMES GRAHAM, BART.

Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department.

October 25, 1842.

SIR,

I would not, if I could have avoided it, trouble you again; but occupying the public situation you do, there is no individual in authority to whom I can, with any chance of success, appeal from your decisions, but to yourself. I am, in reference to my claims upon the Government, entirely in your hands; you are sole arbiter and judge, able, with all the advantages of your high station, to do me justice, or deep and irreparable injury. I now, therefore, once more respectfully solicit a hearing, on the ground that you, sitting as judge in the matter I have laid before you, have decided against me upon testimony which you have not sifted, which will not bear sifting, and which, according to all the established rules of evidence you ought not to have received, or entertained for a single moment.

As long as it was possible, I have forborne to enter into these matters. Gladly would I have continued to abstain, but your refusal to give directions to the Inspector of Anatomy, to furnish me with a supply of bodies for a fresh series of experiments, leaves me no alternative. The Anatomy Act is so worded that neither I, nor any discoverer who may follow me in the same line, can henceforth obtain a supply of bodies for Anatomical uses but through your department, and with the aid of the Inspector of Anatomy, acting under your orders. Some facilities were afforded me by the Teachers of Anatomy in the early part of 1836; but, for similar ones, I can no longer look. From the moment that DR. SOMERVILLE suc-

ceeded in forming that union to which I have before had occasion to draw your attention, and of which I now furnish the proof, by copying his circular, dated 19th September, 1836,* I have understood my position, and that of the Anatomical Teachers of this Metropolis, too well, to ask of them any favor. Those facilities extended only to a supply of *portions* of bodies; but a supply of entire bodies (and *entire* bodies are essential to me now, in order to put down all cavil), I have no legal means of obtaining, but with the sanction of the Home Office; which sanction was in fact obtained previous to my experiments at Guy's in 1836, to which I shall presently have to call your attention. Against your decision, therefore, to withhold from me the facilities, which, with a view to fresh evidence, I have requested, I beg respectfully to remonstrate. You cannot but admit that a strong *primâ facie* case, *to say the least*, has been before you—it is hardly possible to imagine a stronger. By your refusal to allow the necessary facilities for a fresh investigation, you establish a precedent which, if hereafter acted upon, will raise an insuperable barrier in the way of all improvement and discovery in a field of science, which you admit to be "*important*," and where discovery, if real, is "*entitled to reward*."

You cannot be ignorant, for you have Mr. WARBURTON'S authority for the fact, that there are highly influential parties, who have an interest in defeating my case. Between their statements and mine there is, of course, a discrepancy, and a question arises. The late administration, after having gone a great way in this matter, left it unsettled. As they left office without doing me justice, I naturally look to their successors, who cannot now close the doors upon inquiry with a due regard to their own or the public honour.

The position of my case with the Government, when you received the seals of office, was this: "I had made a discovery

* See Appendix (A).

which I considered of great importance to Medical and Anatomical Science. In the early part of 1836, I announced it to the profession. From several of the public teachers of Anatomy, I proceeded to obtain various portions of the Human Body: which, for the satisfaction of those gentlemen, I submitted to my process, and exhibited to them during several successive weeks and months in a perfect state of preservation, and therefore fit for all Anatomical uses. At that time, I contemplated taking out a patent; but finding it to be the general wish of the profession, as shown by a document which I attach to this letter;* a document originating with the teachers of Anatomy, *and not with me*, or in consequence of any suggestion of mine—that I should not do so, but apply to the Government for remuneration upon public grounds, that the discovery might be thrown open to all the Schools of Anatomy in the united kingdom, I was induced to apply to Mr. WARBURTON (the originator of the Anatomy Act, and known to be upon a confidential footing with the late administration), at the express request of the Teachers, in the month of March, 1836; previous to which I had never had any communication with that gentleman, though you have been informed that our acquaintance dated back as far as 1832.

My application to Mr. WARBURTON, was seconded by the late SIR ASTLEY COOPER, who, by a letter in his own hand, introduced me to him. At that period, I had obtained the written testimony of almost every anatomical teacher of eminence in the metropolis, to the completeness and efficiency of my Anti-septic. Those who signed the general certificate, signed it with a full knowledge that it was intended for presentation to the Government; and, in point of fact, the rough copy which I can produce, was drawn up by Mr. PARTRIDGE, the professor of Anatomy at King's College; and the fair copy is in the hand writing of the clerk of that institution.

* See Appendix (B).

Mr. WARBURTON, struck with the specimens and the certificates I was enabled to produce, and seeing, as he could not fail to see, how beneficial my discovery might be, in aid of the Anatomy Act, as well as in advancing Anatomical Science, undertook to communicate with the Government, and endeavour to bring about an arrangement by which I should be remunerated, and the discovery thrown open, to obviate the defects of the Anatomy Bill. He soon became the confidential agent of the Government in the business; and was repeatedly recognised as such by LORD MONTEAGLE, then Mr. SPRING RICE, and Chancellor of the Exchequer. The basis of this negociation had from the first been clearly understood by Mr. WARBURTON and the Government; it was, that in case my discovery were approved, I should receive the sum of £5000. A letter in my possession, dated September 24, 1836, written by Mr. S. M. PHILLIPS, the Under Secretary of State by the direction of LORD JOHN RUSSELL, and addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, recognizes that sum.*

It here becomes necessary to mention that, the connexion of LORD JOHN RUSSELL with my case began at this time. By this letter of Mr. PHILLIPS (which, as the hand writing of the endorsement shows, was transmitted to me by order of Mr. SPRING RICE himself), it will be seen that the Under Secretary of State was directed by LORD JOHN RUSSELL to acknowledge the receipt of a letter of Dr. BIRKBECK, which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had transmitted to him, together with written communications from Mr. ROBERTS to Dr. BIRKBECK, on the subject of a process for the preservation of dead bodies for the purposes of dissection. The Under Secretary of State goes on to say: "*The importance and utility of the process appear to be strongly attested by very*

* See Appendix (C.)

eminent anatomists; but, LORD JOHN RUSSELL would not feel himself warranted in recommending that the course proposed by Mr. ROBERTS should be adopted—that the Government should pay to Mr. ROBERTS the sum of £5,000, for the process invented by him, for the use and benefit of Anatomical Schools."

This letter was handed to me by Mr. WARBURTON. On reading it my remark was, "Then our negociation is utterly at an end." "No!" said Mr. W., in reply, "by no means. I regard the affair in quite a different light. LORD JOHN RUSSELL here distinctly makes the admission to which I have all along been endeavouring to bring the Government namely, that your process is one strongly attested by eminent Anatomists, as one of importance and utility. A great point is now gained; and though, certainly, LORD JOHN accompanies that opinion by saying that he should not feel warranted in recommending that the Government should remunerate you by paying you the sum you ask, yet it is evident from Mr. SPRING RICE's handing this letter to *me,* rather than to DR. BIRKBECK, and with such an indorsement, that he wishes to draw my particular attention again to the subject." Mr. WARBURTON, at the same time remarked, "that Mr. SPRING RICE, was the only scientific man in the cabinet; and added, that as mine was a money question, it was, strictly speaking, more in the department of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, than in that of the Home Secretary. He concluded by strongly urging upon me not to consider the negociation as at an end.

I was influenced by Mr. WARBURTON's view of the case, and again laid aside my intention of taking out a patent, which I had otherwise determined to do immediately. During the recess Mr. SPRING RICE went over to Ireland, and Mr. WARBURTON wrote to him there; but made no communication to me until the month of February, 1837, when I

met him by his own appointment at the University Club-House. He then told me that he had seen Mr. SPRING RICE, *and that that gentleman had instructed him to make a Report as to the completeness of the invention.* It was on this occasion that he said, "I take upon myself the responsibility of making this Report, and I shall require, that *you put me in possession of the secret of your process,* so that my report may be efficient and complete." To this I objected, on the ground that the certificates already proved the efficiency of the invention. He then explained that what he wanted was, to ascertain that the materials I used, were cheap, innocuous, and easy of application; points to which the certificates did not speak; and that, unless I put him in possession of the secret, and gave him an opportunity of certifying to these points, as well as to the efficiency of my process, he could not undertake the task. His expression was, "Even *gold* might be bought too dear." To this demand, acting under the advice of SIR GEORGE SINCLAIR, I finally, and after much consideration, consented, and in November, 1837, in the presence of SIR GEORGE,—*trusting implicitly to the honor and good faith of the Government* and Mr. WARBURTON, put that gentleman, as the representative and confidential agent of the Government, in possession of my secret. Having obtained this, Mr. WARBURTON repeated the experiments himself; and eventually, in the month of January, 1838, or about that time, made his report to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, expressing his decided conviction that my invention was *fully entitled to the praise of both efficiency and cheapness.** I then naturally expected that nothing more remained to be done on my part; but that the sum for which I had originally stipulated, would be paid me. A new difficulty, however, arose. The evidence being, by this time, as com-

* See Appendix (V. and W.)

plete as it was possible to make it, and my claim therefore irresistible by Mr. SPRING RICE, *who, during a year and a-half had entertained the question,* that gentleman proceeded to transfer Mr. WARBURTON'S Report, with all the other papers which from time to time had been entrusted to him, from his own office, to that of LORD JOHN RUSSELL, then Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department. Of this proceeding Mr. WARBURTON, in a letter he addressed to me, speaks with surprise and regret.*

By this management Mr. SPRING RICE, *who had been a party to the re-opening of the negociation,* and whose call upon Mr. WARBURTON for a Report, had weighed with me as the grand inducement to give up my secret, attempted to get rid of his responsibility at the critical moment; and LORD JOHN RUSSELL, overlooking how deeply his colleague the Chancellor of the Exchequer had, in the interval, involved the honor of Her Majesty's Government, and also overlooking his *own* opinion in favor of my process, as recorded in 1836, and having now additional and the strongest evidence before him, again put a negative on my claim. Mr. WARBURTON'S explanation of his Lordship's motives,—though somewhat cautiously expressed, is sufficiently intelligible: *"I should conjecture, that it is the representations of gentlemen who are opposed to summer teaching, that have prevailed against you."*

I have now brought down my narrative to the period of your accession to office. Shortly after that took place, I drew your attention to the fact, that a number of documents bearing upon my case, and including Mr. WARBURTON'S Report, made in 1838, were in your department; and that while that Report clearly and fully established my claims, they had been passed over by the late administration. Mr. WARBURTON'S Report is the chief document upon which I

* See Appendix (D).

have hitherto rested my case, because it was made at the suggestion of Mr. SPRING RICE, in his official capacity as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. WARBURTON, in whom the late Government confided, was their authorised agent in the affair, and his Report ought, as I conceive, to have been deemed conclusive. But what I now especially complain of, is;—not that you, sitting in judgment again upon my case, and with Mr. WARBURTON's Report of 1838 and all the other documents in my favor spread open before you, have not come at once to a decision in my favor; (for, had you appointed another referee, and thought fit to commence the inquiry *de novo*, I should not have murmured;)—but what I especially complain of is this, that knowing, as you could not fail to do, that since the teachers of Anatomy voluntarily gave their certificates in 1836,* there has been a combination formed against me—by the intervention of Dr. SOMERVILLE, acting in his official capacity—of gentlemen opposed to summer teaching; you have called upon SIR BENJAMIN BRODIE, one of the teachers who had signed the chief certificate in 1836; not to know whether the signatures are genuine (for of that you could not entertain a doubt), but to give him an opportunity of destroying in 1842, the testimony he deliberately gave in 1836. And certainly he does, with the most hearty good will, *endeavour* to destroy it. But how? In 1836, when he formed his favorable opinion, and expressed himself "convinced," SIR BENJAMIN BRODIE had "*witnessed the effects of a preparation employed by* Mr. ROBERTS." In 1842, had he corrected that opinion by still farther *witnessing its effects*? CERTAINLY NOT. How then was he qualified to speak, and unsay what he had said? The witness should have been put out of court upon his own confession. But, on the contrary, he is allowed to remain under examination, and tell what he

See Appendix (B. to N.)

cannot of his own knowledge know, but only on the authority of others. Mr. STANLEY of St. Bartholomew's, and Mr. HARRISON the Treasurer of Guy's Hospital, have *told him* so and so.

According to the reports in the newspapers of what you have said in the House of Commons, you have made SIR BENJAMIN BRODIE of as much importance in this matter, as if he had actually been a Commissioner appointed by Her Majesty, to inquire fully into all the merits of my claim.

Dismissing Sir BENJAMIN BRODIE, who, actuated I fear by the *esprit de corps*, is so careless what injury he may do me that he scrupled not to tell you that my alleged discovery was *the same as one made in France*—a fact of which, until he is put in possession of my secret, it is utterly inpossible that he can be cognisant—dismissing him, and taking Mr. STANLEY, who has been made to appear as the sole, and unauthorised representative of all the medical gentlemen who have honoured me by signing certificates in favour of my discovery, what has occurred to alter Mr. STANLEY'S opinion? In March, 1836, he signed the same document as did Sir B. Brodie, *after witnessing the effects of my preparation.* What has he witnessed since?

My acquaintance with Mr. STANLEY commenced in December, 1835. In February, 1836, he called upon me, at my own house, and saw several of my preparations; in the following March, as I have just said, he signed the certificate, and in July or August of the same year, I waited upon him at his private house, when I offered to put into his hands, for dissection, an amputated leg which I had obtained in February, 1836, from St. Thomas's Hospital, and which specimen is now (in 1842) in my possession, in a perfect state of preservation. At first Mr. STANLEY consented to dissect it, but afterwards altered his mind, and proposed to give it to a pupil or demonstrator, to dissect. To this I objected: "I was

willing," I told him, "to trust to *his* honour; but farther than that, I could not go." I well remember his saying on that occasion, "You have got hold of a good thing, if it is well managed." Since then, I have had a casual conversation with Mr. STANLEY, in the museum of St. Bartholomew's; but *no preparation of mine has ever been witnessed by* Mr. STANLEY since the time I saw him in his own house in July or August 1836. I invited him, indeed, to my exhibition at Guy's Hospital, to which I shall presently have occasion to advert, but to that he did not come. He had previously suggested my going to St. Bartholomew's, and making experiments there; and my impression is, that he was not pleased at my going to Guy's, a rival institution. What adequate or reasonable cause Mr. STANLEY can have had to alter his opinion, is to me a mystery. That he was very decidedly opposed to *summer-teaching*, I have been long aware; but it is not possible that he can have any knowledge of his own, to my disadvantage. No actual knowledge of his on the subject in question comes down later than July or August, 1836, at which time he said, "I had got hold of a good thing, if it was well managed." Again I ask, whether all the certificates of eminent men in my favour, are to be cancelled because Mr. STANLEY thinks fit to stultify himself.

But Mr. HARRISON, the treasurer of Guy's Hospital, is also called as a witness against my claims. My connexion with Mr. HARRISON shall be stated as briefly as possible.

In the month of June 1836, I was waited upon by Mr. BRANSBY COOPER, who had previously seen and examined sundry preparations of mine, and had signed the same certificate as Mr. STANLEY and Sir B. BRODIE, along with eight other leading practitioners. Mr. B. COOPER came to me *of his own accord*, with a request that I would call upon Mr. HARRISON; I accordingly did so, and was told by that gentleman, that he had been upon the point of coming over to me himself.

Mr. HARRISON on this occasion proposed that a series of experiments should be made by me at Guy's, and offered a supply of bodies for that purpose; he also undertook to fit up a separate room where they could be deposited, which room I was to have *under lock and key*. Free access was to be granted during certain hours of every day, that all who chose might make their own observations, and dissect, if they wished; on all such occasions I was to be in attendance. Two stipulations, and only two, I made; one, that the bodies should be in my keeping, and that all dissections should take place in my presence; the other, that I should have a reasonable compensation for my time from Mr. HARRISON, on the part of the Hospital. To both these conditions, he readily consented. There was a clear understanding on these points.

It was, I think, about the first week in July (1836), when the first body was furnished me, accompanied by the rather startling intimation from Mr. HARRISON, that a leg and thigh of it, would, after undergoing my process, be wanted for the modeller. To this I, *in limine*, objected, as the demand involved a departure from the terms upon which I had entered upon the undertaking. In consequence of my insisting upon our original agreement, the limb in question was separated from the body, and removed before I commenced my operations.

By the latter end of July, or the first week in August, I had had four bodies and a-half assigned to me for my experiments at Guy's, including half a body which came into my possession under very peculiar circumstances. My attention happening to be drawn, one day, to a small room close to the one which I was occupying, by a very offensive smell, I called one of the attendants (no other than Mr. DAVIS the chief porter of the dissecting rooms, to whom I shall have to refer hereafter), and insisted upon its being unlocked;

upon which I discovered the upper half of a body in a high state of decomposition—so much so that several portions of the surface had sloughed away. For what purpose these remains were concealed there, I never could understand; but, had I not fortunately detected their presence when I did, I have often thought they might have furnished plausible evidence against me, which it would have been difficult for me to rebut. On this half body, I experimented; and such was the power of my process, that it arrested decomposition, and rendered the whole so perfectly inoffensive, that I allowed it to remain along with the other specimens until they were all finally removed for interment.

On the 10th of August (1836,) one of the bodies was *injected* for the purpose of minute dissection. The operation of injection was performed by the regular servant of the hospital (Mr. DAVIS), after the body had been in my possession *about a month*. The injected fluid ran freely through all the usual passages—there was no difficulty whatever—thus proving that the subject was in the most perfect state of preservation, notwithstanding the long interval which had elapsed. It was afterwards dissected, about the middle of August, by two young men who were, at that time, aspirants to promotion in the hospital *(demonstrators,* I believe); and as, during the time they were dissecting, their was something in their demeanour which led me to think they might have come with an unfriendly intent, though nothing tangible dropped from them—(one expression which they let fall, is imprinted on my mind, namely: "The students have not a taste for *pickled bodies,*")—I subsequently took the precaution of submitting the leg and thigh of the injected body which they had dissected, to the scrutiny of Dr. TODD, one of the anatomical lecturers at King's College, and obtained from him the certificate dated August 23, 1836, which I shall presently insert. As a further precaution, I, some weeks after, prevailed upon

Mr. MACKMURDO, the Senior Lecturer in Anatomy at St. Thomas's Hospital, to come to Guy's. Mr. MACKMURDO, after carefully examining all my preparations, including the injected body, gave me the certificate dated September 24, 1836. To that last certificate I also particularly solicit your attention.

I continued to exhibit my preparations at Guy's, without the slightest reserve, to all parties who came; I did this from about the 10th of July, *until the 4th of October;* in corroboration of which latter date, I have a note of Dr. SOMERVILLE's fixing to meet me at Guy's, to inspect them on that day. Thus it is incontrovertible, that during the greater part of July, and the whole of August and September, *the hottest months of the year,* I maintained my position at Guy's. What have my adversaries—what has Mr. HARRISON to say to this? Is it possible, is it conceivable, that any man whose "whole experiment" was, as SIR BENJAMIN BRODIE, Mr. STANLEY, and Mr. HARRISON, would have you believe, "A COMPLETE FAILURE," could have stood his ground within the walls of Guy's Hospital, with all eyes upon him and his preparations, during twelve or fourteen weeks of the hottest portion of the year? The fact and the statement, are directly at variance.

Having entered upon the month of October, and the season for lectures and dissection having commenced, we arrive at perhaps the most extraordinary fact of all. At the latter end of September, Mr. HARRISON himself proposed to me, that the bodies which I had had all this while in my special keeping, should be transferred from the room in which they were, to the ordinary dissecting rooms; assigning as a reason, that at the commencement of the season, they were always desirous to make as good a show as possible; meaning, as I understood, in order to induce pupils to enter. These two

facts, SIR JAMES, I do most earnestly desire to press upon your attention; the first, that I maintained my ground with prepared bodies in Guy's Hospital during the time I have stated; the second, that at the end of that time, Mr. HARRISON himself was the man to propose that they should then be *transferred to the pupils' dissecting rooms.* If Mr. HARRISON, in 1842, chooses to say that the whole of my experiment at Guy's in 1836, was a complete failure, what is his testimony worth?

This last proposal of Mr. HARRISON'S, was one to which I, of course, could not listen: *that he well knew when he made it;* but it furnished him with an excuse to others for breaking off his connexion with me. I was in no respect to blame. The bodies once out of my custody, what possible security could I have had, that they would not have been tampered with to my disadvantage? what guarantee that they would not have been analyzed and submitted to chemical or other tests, for the purpose of discovering my secret?

Mr. HARRISON having proceeded to hold out a threat of taking legal possession of the bodies, I immediately gave notice that I should deliver them over for interment; at the same time, as this second request of Mr. HARRISON (so much bolder than his original one), was directly in the teeth of one of my fundamental stipulations, I felt I could not place any further confidence in his honor; and that my only security lay in rendering the bodies *unfit for dissection.* This, as a matter of prudence and necessity, I did; and then delivered them over for interment. *Thus ended my connexion with* Mr. HARRISON, a gentleman who, in the affairs of Guy's, has been so long accustomed to have his will regarded as law, that he can ill brook independence in any man.

On the 7th of October, 1836, I finally left Guy's, having a claim upon Mr. HARRISON (unfortunately not reduced to

writing) for a compensation for my time from the latter end of the previous June, to that date, which claim he has ever since met evasively. With the funds of the richest Hospital in England constantly passing through his hands, he has urged the plea of *want of funds.*

In your speech on Mr. HARDY'S motion, you represented SIR BENJAMIN BRODIE as stating, upon the authority of Mr. HARRISON and Mr. STANLEY, that "the whole experiment was a complete failure;" it is therefore of the utmost importance to my case that you should be apprized, that neither of those gentlemen to whom SIR BENJAMIN refers as "authorities," knows any thing of this, my greatest experiment, from observations made by himself. With their own eyes they have not witnessed one of those preparations. They are as incapable of speaking of them from their own personal knowledge, as is SIR BENJAMIN himself. It is a remarkable feature in my case, that, of all the Medical Staff of Guy's, no one individual has ever been publicly put forward to support and corroborate Mr. HARRISON'S statement of the result. Well do I remember the generous encomium pronounced at Guy's by Mr. BRANSBY COOPER, on one occasion, after he had examined the specimens:—"*Really* Mr. ROBERTS, *this is beautiful,*" were his words.

But while the Medical Staff of Guy's Hospital, where the chief experiments* took place, have never up to this hour, even whispered, as far as I can learn, such an opinion as Mr. HARRISON is said to have pronounced, *there have been other whisperings,* and of a description which—*thanks to the Bishop of Exeter*—I am in a position to give an account of. Through the kindness of that distinguished prelate, I am in possession of a letter dated "Guy's Hospital, 7th May, 1838," which

* I call them my "*chief* experiments," because they were experiments upon *entire bodies,* and the *only* entire bodies ever submitted to my process.

certainly gives no flattering account of my experiments there. The letter is as follows :—

"GUY'S HOSPITAL, 7th MAY, 1838.

"SIR,

"The large masses of human flesh seen by Mr. ROBERTS, at Guy's Hospital, were probably four bodies he attempted to preserve, which became decomposed under his process, and were buried without dissection.

"The utmost care is taken to prevent the parts of subjects being mixed; but, from the nature of the thing, it is impossible to say but it may occur occasionally.

"As to the sale of bones, DAVIS has often imported them from France, and even went personally to Paris to do so; and if he should have ever taken the bones of a pauper subject, it was at the risk of losing a good situation; for so strict have we been at Guy's, that a student, last year, having purloined an extremity, it was reported to Dr. SOMERVILLE, and the student was not suffered to again dissect here.

"Such, Sir, are the remarks I have to make upon the points to which you have directed my attention; and would only add, that the character of DAVIS, by all who know him, is far above the insinuation thrown out against him. I never knew a man, in such a situation, conduct himself with so much propriety, and the case of the student alluded to, was from his report of the delinquency."

"Yours faithfully"

. . . . . .

And now, SIR JAMES, is your curiosity awakened to know who it is, that, while the whole Medical Staff of Guy's are silent, steps forward *(unprompted,* of course), to prejudice my claims? It is no other than Mr. JAMES BROWELL, the House Steward of Guy's, a non-medical personage, who never, at any time, saw a single one of the preparations in question; never once crossed the threshold of the room in which they were exhibited; and who, when solicited by me

to view them (as he was on several occasions), uniformly excused himself by saying that "the matter was in Mr. HARRISON's hands."

As it was just possible the name of Mr. DAVIS, might not have reached the ears of the Bishop, the late SIR ASTLEY COOPER, who appears to have been the channel through which the letter was forwarded, kindly, as Mr. HARRISON's friend, I conclude, indorsed it—not with any opinion of his own on the subject of my experiments; not a syllable escapes him either in praise or in disparagement of them; but the prudent SIR ASTLEY, having the recollection of the certificate he had once signed clearly before him, contents himself with giving Mr. DAVIS, the porter of the dissecting room, *a character!* Thus does SIR ASTLEY, at one and the same moment, oblige his friend Mr. HARRISON, and dexterously contrive *to keep out of a scrape.* The indorsement upon the House Steward's letter, is in the following terms:—

"To the above testimony of DAVIS's character I beg to add my own, for there never was a person in his situation of greater integrity, or one in whose conduct more and well-merited confidence could be reposed."

(Signed) "ASTLEY COOPER."

"*May* 8, 1838."

Having thus traced the "*pea*" till we have discovered it under Mr. BROWELL's "*cup,*" I will not attempt to guess where the art of thimble-rig may whirl it next.

Against this document which I have inserted *verbatim,* I now feel it due to my case to produce the certificates of Dr. TODD and Mr. MACKMURDO, two Anatomists of the very first eminence. They will enable you, SIR JAMES, to discover on which side the truth lies.

"I hereby certify that I have had various opportunities of forming

an opinion respecting the value of the fluid prepared by Mr. Roberts, for the purpose of preserving animal substances.

"I believe it to be a most valuable acquisition to the Anatomist, and that it preserves parts of human bodies, *with less alteration of the natural aspect of the different structures*, than any other fluid or preparation I have ever seen employed. Indeed I cannot hesitate to say that a limb *preserved by this fluid, even for so long a period as six weeks or two months, is quite as useful for the purposes of dissection as in its freshest state.*"

(Signed) "R. B. Todd,
Professor of Physiology and Morbid Anatomy in King's College."

"26, Parliament Street,
August 23, 1836."

"Having on several occasions examined *different bodies* which have been preserved by Mr. Roberts's Anti-septic fluid for various periods of time, I most willingly bear my testimony in favor of this gentleman's discovery.

"*I have dissected portions of bodies preserved in this manner, for many months previous to my visits;* I found them *free from the usual offensive smell;* the different structures were *preserved in their integrity*, and *the deep seated muscles, &c.*, exhibited the *color* and *firmness peculiar to the flesh of bodies recently dead:* the *skin, vessels*, and *nerves*, as well as the *internal viscera*, excited my surprise by the *natural* and *fresh* appearance. From the experience I have had of the effects of this process, I am led to anticipate the best results, whether I consider the *health* of the students, or *their increased advantages in studying Anatomy.*"

(Signed) "Gilbert Mackmurdo,
Senior Lecturer on Anatomy and Physiology at St. Thomas's Hospital."

"7, New Broad Street,
24th September, 1836."

I entreat you, Sir James, to mark the *date* of this last certificate.

The case between me and *the College of Surgeons*, which SIR BENJAMIN BRODIE appears to have thrown in as a *make-weight*, amounts to nothing. My connexion with the College may be dispatched in a few words:—It is true that I made a proposal to that body, but one differing essentially from that which SIR BENJAMIN attributes to me. In consequence of that proposal, I was summoned by an official note (see Appendix E.) to meet the Board of Curators in the month of May, 1836, and was directed to bring with me any preparations I might have; and also (what appeared to me to be a little unreasonable)—"*a sample of the liquid or material I used in my process.*" At the appointed time I attended, producing a number of my preparations; but, for obvious reasons, withholding that which constituted my secret. The Board had my preparations conveyed into the room in which they assembled, and after continuing in deliberation about two hours, broke up without calling me in, or coming to any decision; and I have never been able to obtain an answer from those gentlemen from that day to this. Such was the treatment I received, from "the Board of Curators."

I have now, SIR JAMES, shown the character of the evidence by which you have been misled. But there is still a reason of perhaps greater weight than any I have yet urged, why you should grant me a re-hearing, and if I may be allowed the use of the term, *a new trial*. It is this—that EVERY TITTLE OF THE EVIDENCE, SUCH AS IT IS, ON WHICH YOU HAVE DECIDED AGAINST ME, IS DRAWN FROM ALLEGED TRANSACTIONS IN THE YEAR 1836; WHEREAS MY NEGOCIATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT THROUGH MR. WARBURTON WAS SUBSEQUENT TO THOSE TRANSACTIONS, AND DID NOT COME TO A CRISIS UNTIL APRIL 1838.

It was with a perfect knowledge of all the previous steps I had taken, including my connexion with Mr. HARRISON, that

Mr. WARBURTON undertook the advocacy of my claims. It was not until 1838, that that gentleman, who had been in frequent communication with Mr. SPRING RICE upon the subject during the previous eighteen months, told me that he was called upon to make a Report to the Government; but that, before he would consent to make it, he must be put in possession of my secret; *that concession on my part, he stated to be indispensible, as the condition of his proceeding.* I yielded, and in that year he made his Report, testifying in the most decisive terms to the completeness and economy of my process.

What has occurred *since*, to invalidate my claims? My opponents have nothing subsequent to allege; they can only go back to 1836, and even then, have no chance of making out their allegations, but by misrepresenting the occurrences of that year. The question which I beg respectfully to propose for your dispassionate consideration is this:—whether the Report of the confidential agent of the late Government, made in consequence of *his own* experiments, and after I had disclosed to him my secret is to be got rid of; whether it is to be superseded and invalidated, by statements of supposed transactions in 1836, made by parties, *not one of whom* from SIR BENJAMIN BRODIE downwards, has personal cognizance of the facts to which he is forward to speak? Such testimony, I humbly submit, ought never to have been entertained for a moment; still less should it have been put in competition with the official Report of the authorized agent of the late Government, who had the whole case before him, and *had an opportunity of testing my discovery with his own hands.*

If Mr. WARBURTON's Report, after all, fails to convince you, am I unreasonable in requesting that *a fresh inquiry* may be instituted, before my process is stigmatized by a Minister of the Crown, as "a complete failure?" a process to the efficiency of which not only SIR BENJAMIN BRODIE and Mr. STANLEY have borne witness, but the late SIR ASTLEY

COOPER, Mr. JOSEPH HENRY GREEN, Mr. MACKMURDO, Mr. BRANSBY COOPER, Mr. GRAINGER, Mr. SKEY, Dr. TODD, and Mr. PARTRIDGE; Dr. SOMERVILLE, the Ex-Inspector of Schools of Anatomy, and finally Mr. WARBURTON, the referee of the late Government? Of these twelve gentlemen (and I could enumerate many others similarly situated) there are still *ten* whose declared opinions in favor of my discovery stand unretracted, and unshaken.

It occurs to me that there may still be a difficulty in your mind to which I have not adverted; namely, that of conceiving how any gentleman moving in so respectable a sphere as do Mr. HARRISON, and the London Teachers of Anatomy, can be combined against an humble individual like myself, to keep down a valuable discovery. Mr. WARBURTON, in his letter to me, throws a remarkable light upon that subject, *but not all the light* that can be thrown. He accounts for their hostility on the ground that they are opposed to *summer teaching*. But in addition to that, there is, I am confident, another reason. I will, as briefly as possible, explain:—The principal schools of anatomy derive a great part of their supply of bodies from the hospitals to which they are attached. The unclaimed bodies of persons dying in these institutions cost the anatomical schools *nothing*. Another part of their supply is furnished by the metropolitan workhouses. These bodies are obtained on payment of the clergyman's fees, seldom exceeding *half-a-crown* or *three-and-sixpence*. The remainder of their supply comes from pauper houses in the country, and from jails; and the bodies so obtained (according to the distances they have to travel), have charges upon them amounting to 20s. or 30s. each. Now, the Anatomy Act was intended to put a stop to *the traffic in human bodies*; but while the sale of *entire* bodies is by the new law prohibited, the sale of *parts* is not. Under the system introduced by Mr. WARBURTON'S Act, those profits

which formerly went into the pockets of the *resurrection-men* and *body-snatchers*, as they were called, now actually go into the coffers of those respectable institutions, the hospitals and the schools of anatomy. A pupil studying anatomy pays for his several portions of the human body precisely as he would have done formerly; with this only difference, that the price is regulated by a more fixed standard—the fluctuations are less. Take Guy's Hospital as an instance:—Under the management of Mr. BENJAMIN HARRISON, who has every thing there under his supervision and controul, about £4. is extracted from the pockets of the students, for every corpse which is laid upon the dissecting table. No matter whether it has cost the establishment any thing or nothing, upon those terms it is allotted to the students; the four pounds being often *clear gain*.

My invention would greatly economise the use of bodies. A much smaller number would suffice. Probably those of persons convicted of the heavier crimes would be amply sufficient. But this would materially diminish the revenue derived from this traffic, carried on in a wholesale manner by these respectable institutions. Guy's Hospital probably does not realize less than from £300 to £400, yearly, by this means. Under the "reformed" system, many hundreds of bodies which have not cost the hospital one single farthing, or at most 2s. 6d., or 3s. 6d. each, have been apportioned to the pupils at not less than the price I have stated.

You, SIR JAMES, I understand, are on the point of correcting many abuses which, at various times, have been pointed out to the government. Correct this last crying abuse by which from two to £3000. annually, is drawn from the pockets of the medical students in London alone, whose education is made sufficiently expensive without the addition of such impositions, and one ground of the hostility shown by

interested parties, maligners of my discovery, will be at an end. Let the existing system be so corrected that it shall cease to be *profitable*, and the house-steward of Guy's will no longer be instigated to employ his pen in addressing private letters to Members of the Legislature, about matters respecting which he personally, and by his own experience, knows *absolutely nothing!*

There are one or two other remarks which I am desirous of making, and the first is this:—there are in London alone from 1500 to 2000 pupils who enter to the Anatomical Lectures. Many hundreds of these students attend the dissecting rooms in the course of the winter, and have to dissect bodies that quickly become decomposed. Under the present system the pupils run great risk, and often injure their health materially, and in some instances pay the forfeit of their lives. These evils the introduction of my discovery would entirely obviate, but without the sanction of the Government such a consummation cannot be effected.

Under the existing system, there are also other disadvantages under which the pupils labour, which ought not to be overlooked. Many of these young men are destined to go abroad, and are looking forward to appointments in Her Majesty's service, or in that of the East India Company. Now those who eventually obtain such situations, know not how soon, when once they have left their own shores, their duty may call them, unaided and alone, to perform what are called *grand operations;* those upon the skilful performance of which, the future efficiency, the freedom from protracted suffering, and even the very life of the patient—often one who may be of the utmost value to his country—may depend. Here at home their want of skill, judgment, and experience, might have been compensated, and supplied; but once abroad, and they must then often depend solely upon their own resources; climate or casualties of one kind or another,

are constantly carrying off the senior surgeons where there are none but junior to supply their place. Under the present system—as Dr. SOMERVILLE's Circular, already referred to shows—600 pauper bodies annually, are not sufficient for the Anatomical Schools of London alone. Such is the waste of them, that the most industrious pupils are constantly losing part of the dissecting season, through the want of an adequate supply, or from the interruption of their health, resulting from the pollution of the atmosphere they necessarily breathe. If their constitutions can bear the confinement, still, even in that case, they are constantly checked in acquiring Anatomical knowledge and experience, because, with an insufficient and irregular supply (now of necessity confined to the winter months), they cannot *keep the subjects* which they do obtain sufficiently long for that minute, deliberate, and repeated study of the parts, which is requisite to render the pupil in Anatomy competent to the higher duties of his profession; and it is a matter of notoriety, that a very considerable number of the pupils who now pass the College of Surgeons, pass solely by the aid of what is called *the grinding system;* there being teachers who devote themselves to that particular branch of instruction, and to whom the appellation of "grinders" is commonly applied. Hence the great majority of the pupils who become Assistant Surgeons in the public services to which I have referred, have to go through a course of practice upon *living* subjects instead of *dead* ones, before they can by possibility become skilful and safe operators.

On the indispensible importance of an Anti-septic Process to the perfecting of the excellent plans you are understood to contemplate,* for effecting the more decent interment of the bodies of destitute paupers which may, from time to time, be submitted to Anatomical uses, I will not on this occasion dwell. I have perhaps sufficiently adverted to that topic in

* This passage had reference to plans which have not been carried out.

my former communications to her Majesty's Government and especially in my last petition to the House of Commons. Suffice it for me now to say, that such is the rapid decay of human bodies after death—so quickly do they perish, if left to the ordinary rules of nature—that the business of the Anatomical Schools cannot be carried on with a due respect either to the feelings of surviving relatives, or to what are the just claims of the departed, unless some Anti-septic Process is resorted to.

But, entirely waving that argument on this occasion, I beg to press upon your attention, that the introduction of an Anti-septic Process is due to the *living;* this point is clear and indisputable, whether we regard merely the health, the comfort, and the lives of the Anatomical pupils, or take into account the welfare and interests of those who may hereafter be dependent upon them for professional assistance. An Anti-septic Process that will preserve bodies in the state and under the circumstances that mine has been shown capable of doing, is of the very utmost importance to the progress and extension of Medical and Anatomical Science.

I now conclude this my appeal to your sense of justice, by a request that you will institute a fresh, a searching, and an impartial inquiry, into the merits of my discovery for preserving human bodies for Anatomical uses; assuring you, that by the result of such inquiry I am prepared cheerfully to abide.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

WILLIAM ROBERTS.

SECOND LETTER TO SIR J. GRAHAM, BART.

Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department.

December 14, 1842.

SIR,

Since I had the honour of transmitting to you a summary of my case, which I did on the 25th of last October, I have had the good fortune to lay my hands upon two documents which I had happened to mislay, and which I now annex.*

The first of these is a copy of a letter from that eminent surgeon and anatomist, Mr. GILBERT MACKMURDO, dated August 25, 1836, the original of which is in the Home Office. The points to which I would particularly draw your attention in reference to this document, are, *first*, that it was written, as the date shows, during the time that I was conducting my experiments *within the walls* of Guy's Hospital, and in one of the hottest months of the year; *secondly*, that it was written *after* Mr. MACKMURDO had visited Guy's, and been an eye-witness of my experiments there; and *thirdly*, that the injected body, to the state of which he so pointedly alludes, was, and could be, no other than the one which DAVIS, the porter of the dissecting room at Guy's, had himself injected a month after it had been submitted to my process.

These explanatory points which I now urge, are each capable of clear and indisputable proof.

The other letter (addressed to LORD JOHN RUSSELL), of which I transmit a copy, is of secondary importance, but is not without its value, as tending to show that the late Dr.

* See Appendix (L.) and (N.)

BIRKBECK, a man of great scientific attainments, had taken up the advocacy of my claims *on no light grounds*.

Feeling convinced that you have too confidingly listened to the statements of parties who have private interests and friendships to serve, I am anxious to place before you every document that can contribute to bring you to a just and equitable decision, in the still unshaken confidence, that it is your wish to arrive at the truth, and take that course which your deliberate judgment, with all the facts before you, may dictate.

The circumstance should never be lost sight of, that, surrounded as my case has been with barriers and hindrances now for a number of years, it had next to none to encounter until that combination and union of anatomical teachers (gentlemen opposed to *summer* teaching), was formed, which, as I have shown by documentary evidence, was plotted and originated in October 1836, by the now discharged Inspector of Anatomy—*a combination as decidedly injurious to the public interests as to mine*. From that period I have been constantly met by counter-working in the dark. From open and manly hostility, the parties have invariably shrunk.

If, after perusing the documents which I now annex, it should appear to you, that there still remain points on which my statements have not been sufficiently clear and explicit; or if there should happen to be any fresh topic or charge connected with my case upon which you are desirous of receiving my explanations, I can only say, that I shall be most thankful if you will afford me an opportunity of supplying the requisite information, and that I will furnish it to the uttermost of my power. If Mr. BROWELL, the house-steward, Mr. HARRISON, the treasurer of Guy's, or any one else, has any thing to allege against me or my discovery, let us be confronted. Let me know my accusers, and have an opportunity afforded me of meeting them upon something like equal terms. Do not,

in consequence of any prejudice which you may have incautiously allowed yourself to imbibe in the first instance, or through the pressure of business in the department over which you have been called upon to preside—do not, I say, leave me to be victimised by anonymous accusers, or by persons at whose names and statements I can only get by the most fortuitous accidents. From fair and manly treatment I fear nothing; but from such attempts to ruin my humble reputation I have every thing to fear. These stabs in the dark, come from what hands they may, are as unmanly as they are un-English.

I am, now, in your hands. As her Majesty's Chief Secretary of State for the Home Department, you can do me justice, and *more* I do not ask.

Anxiously awaiting your determination.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

(Signed) WILLIAM ROBERTS.

THIRD LETTER TO SIR J. GRAHAM, BART.

Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department.

JANUARY, 4, 1843.

SIR,

The statement of facts which I had the honor of transmitting to you on the 25th of last October, was calculated, I had hoped, to remove entirely from your mind, the prejudices you had imbibed, when, in the discussion that took place on Mr. HARDY'S motion, you publicly stated that my invention had been "investigated, and found defective." You have now in your possession a chain of incontrovertible proofs to the contrary. The evidence before you as to the perfection of my discovery, is now, I venture respectfully to maintain, complete.

As to the importance of some Anti-septic Process applicable to bodies intended for dissection, there has never, I believe, been any difference of opinion. You have yourself acknowledged (and this, on the occasion to which I have referred), that if "Mr. ROBERTS had made such a discovery as he had described, *he would be entitled to a reward.*" My process is one which cannot fail "to promote and facilitate the practical study of Anatomy," an object the importance of which to the profession and the public (I use the words of the Inspectors of Schools of Anatomy, as employed in their recent Circular), "*it is difficult to exaggerate.*"

From that document, it is clear that the Inspectors feel that the Anatomy Act has not worked properly, and that, under existing circumstances, it is a most difficult Act to work at all creditably: that the greatest care is requisite "to avoid to the utmost all causes of offence to feelings and prejudices;"

and finally, that not only "parochial authorities" have to be conciliated, but "public opinion."

Those causes of offence to feelings and prejudices, I venture once more to affirm, can never be removed without the adoption of some Anti-septic Process.

Let the greatest care be taken "in all the steps relating to the mode of receiving bodies,"—let "the accuracy and the genuineness of the Medical Certificates" be ever so scrupulously attended to,—let "the notice to the Inspector in the prescribed period before removal" be given with the most undeviating punctuality,—still the final object of all these arrangements, "*the decent interment* of the remains of each body after examination," can never be secured without an Anti-septic Process to preserve identity. Putrefaction must be arrested by some means or other:—if not, whether the burial of a body, received for Anatomical examination, takes place in six weeks (now the legal limit), or in the shorter period of a month, *decent interment* will be entirely unattainable. Under the present system, it is notorious that the parts are perpetually *sloughing away*, as it is called, even in the winter months, and often long before the pupils can retrace and correct their first dissections. The most indefatigable of the medical students can seldom investigate so thoroughly and minutely as to get more than a very slender knowledge of Anatomy, though it has been justly termed the key-stone of their profession. The difficulty is one which no precautions that are practicable under the existing Law, and no fresh provisions that might be introduced into any amended Act, can properly meet in the absence of a preservative process. Without this, the means of proving identity will be gradually but constantly diminishing, and the knowledge of this will continue to foster that *apathy*, of which the newly-appointed Inspectors already so justly complain, as evinced by "*nearly all, whose feelings or more immediate interests are not*

involved." The only effectual check to that apathy will be furnished by providing the uneffaceable means of proving identity, which could easily be connected with the process, the secret of which I have been induced to confide to Her Majesty's Government, and which means I shall, at any time when called upon, be happy to point out.

The Inspectors are right in making the efforts they are doing, though it be but in the forlorn hope of removing that apathy; but, until the Anatomy Act is combined with an Anti-septic Process, their efforts will be unavailing; Anatomical Science will continue to be retarded, and the religious feelings of the community wounded; while the prospect of decent interment to the languishing and friendless pauper, if entertained at all, will remain the grossest of delusions.

I have now, in conclusion, a request to make:—My recent statements, and especially the one bearing date the 25th of October, include the mention of many important particulars with which you were entirely unacquainted when you declined, some months ago, to proceed farther in this matter. I am now, therefore, anxious to learn whether you have taken them into consideration; and, if so, whether they have, in any respect, altered your determination, or whether your former answer must be regarded by me as final. Information upon these points, I now earnestly and respectfully solicit."

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble Servant,

(Signed) WILLIAM ROBERTS.

SPEECH OF SIR JAMES GRAHAM, BART.

See Times, July 18, 1842.

SIR JAMES GRAHAM said, that amidst the great variety of subjects that were brought under the consideration of the house, scarcely any question was less calculated for public discussion in an assembly of that kind than the present one. (Hear.) He thought also that it was still less eligible for discussion before any tribunal which that house might appoint. (Hear.) He admitted the importance of the question. However distressing it might be to the feelings of some persons, it was absolutely necessary, for the benefit of the living, that morbid Anatomy should be practiced. Until the Anatomy Act was passed, there were many outrages committed upon public decency, and much danger to human life was incurred, in the mode in which bodies were procured for dissection. During the inquiries before the Committee which was appointed at the suggestion of Mr. WARBURTON, to whose exertions the passing of the Anatomy Bill was mainly attributable, sufficiently disgusting exposures were made respecting the disinterment of bodies; but since that Bill had become the law of the land, the scenes of violence and crime which accompanied those exhumations had almost, if not entirely, ceased. (Hear, hear.) *He would inform his honorable and learned friend, that so long ago as that time,* Mr. WARBURTON *was in communication with the inventor upon the subject.* It was then thought that the experiment of Mr. ROBERTS would be an available one. He (SIR JAMES GRAHAM) could not dissemble from the house that *two or three of the enactments of the Anatomy Act had not been complied with;* but he wished to set his honorable and learned friend right

with regard to the provision respecting Inspectors. The Act did not prescribe three Inspectors, but the clause was of a permissive nature, giving a power to appoint three Inspectors, should that number be thought necessary. *One only had been nominated; consequently the expense of the whole establishment was less than if three had been appointed; while, he believed, the duty was better fulfilled than it would be if three Inspectors were engaged.*

As to the quarterly returns, he had in his office distinct proofs that *his predecessors had from time to time watched the working of the act; therefore it had not been a dead letter;* and he could assure his hon. and learned friend that he had paid due attention to this department of the public business. The allegations respecting the burial of bodies were submitted by himself to a commission consisting of Mr. ROGERS, a Queen's counsel, and he believed now a deputy-judge advocate, and Mr. GREEN, a distinguished surgeon; *and all the abuses complained of were checked,* Dr. SOMERVILLE being warned of them, and desired to prevent their recurrence. All the provisions of the Act were, he believed, most carefully attended to. Having stated the substance of the report, he hoped the house would not press for its production. *Passing from the Anatomy Bill, he would now come to the prayer of the petition, which he believed to be, under the guise of an attempt to carry out more effectively the objects of that Bill, an application for a grant from the public purse for an alleged discovery for national importance.* (Hear, hear). *If* Mr. ROBERTS *had made such a discovery as he had described, he would be entitled to a reward;* but, from the best information he had been able to collect, he was led to the conclusion that the opposite was the case. His hon. friend had mentioned a certificate which was signed in 1836 by many eminent men, who stated that from what they saw, it was a discovery of great importance and most useful to society. Three names were mentioned by his hon. friend—SIR B. BRODIE, MR. STANLEY,

and Mr. GREEN, and three more eminent persons and competent judges of the matter could scarcely have been found. His hon. friend also said that the teachers of anatomy were prejudiced against Mr. ROBERTS, and wished to continue the present system for the sake of obtaining pupils. Why, to such a man as SIR B. BRODIE it must be a positive sacrifice to be withdrawn from his professional business with patients; but he was a man who disregarded personal advantages in his zeal for the promotion and improvement of that science which he adorned. (Hear, hear.) In April, 1836, Mr. ROBERTS proposed to the College of Surgeons that they should give him 1,000£. for his invention, and use their interest with the Government to procure for him a further sum of 2,000£. "I cannot find that the college (says SIR B. BRODIE) ever answered this application. Mr. ROBERTS afterwards made some similar proposals to the teachers of anatomical schools. SIR A. COOPER and myself signed a paper, which you have seen, after examining a body which Mr. ROBERTS said had been unburied some time. *But subsequently it appeared that the whole experiment was a complete failure.*" This was the testimony given on the authority of Mr. HARRISON, the treasurer of Guy's Hospital, and Mr. STANLEY. SIR B. BRODIE went on to state that the same discovery had been made in France; and he added in his communication, "*However useful it may be, it can never supersede the necessity of dissection.*" He thought, then, that it was sufficiently clear from the opinions of men whose original impressions were in favour of the discovery, that it had been already fully investigated, and had proved to be a failure. He therefore trusted that his honorable and learned friend would not press his motion. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. HARDY replied, that he should be sorry to press this or any other motion upon the attention of the house after observations similar to those just made by the right hon.

baronet. He was not aware that the facts detailed in the petition, which certainly seemed to be very extraordinary in their nature, had been the subject of previous consideration, or he would not have urged them again upon the notice of the house and the Government. At the same time, it was strange that SIR B. BRODIE and other eminent gentlemen should have been so indiscreet as to sign the certificate which he had read to the house, merely upon the representation of Mr. ROBERTS, that he kept a body unburied for a certain length of time. After what had been stated by the right hon. baronet and seeing the disposition of the house, he should not press his motion. (Hear.)

APPENDIX.

(A).

COPY OF A LETTER OF DR. SOMERVILLE, THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS OF ANATOMY.

"5, Saville Row, 19th Sep. 1836.

"DEAR SIR,

I feel it my duty, on the approach of another season, to call your attention to some circumstances in the operation of the Anatomy Act; and to express my great anxiety that, by your zealous co-operation, the difficulties which have hitherto occurred may be avoided.

"The number of bodies received for Anatomical Examination in London during the session 1835-6, amounts to about 600. There has never existed a doubt on my mind, that, were some of the Teachers to unite their exertions with the Inspector, for the purpose of carrying into effect the regulations established by the Secretary of State, *solely* for the advantage of the Schools, an increase would result to the supply far exceeding even the increasing demand.

"To ensure this desirable object, I shall be happy to confer with you at any time you may appoint, to concert the best means of overcoming the difficulties which still exist in some of the Parishes.

"As it has ever been an object of the first importance, that the bodies should be distributed to the Schools according to the just claims of each, I need not assure you of my anxiety to promote any scheme which you can suggest to further this end, and I shall be obliged by your communicating it to me as early as convenient, that it may be submitted to the consideration of LORD JOHN RUSSELL."

"I am,

"Dear Sir,

"Yours very faithfully,

(Signed) "JAMES C. SOMERVILLE."

"To ———— Esq. Teacher of Anatomy, &c."

(B.)

JOINT CERTIFICATE.

"March, 1836.

"We, the undersigned Surgeons and Anatomical Teachers in London, have witnessed the effects of a liquid, prepared and employed by Mr. WILLIAM ROBERTS, for the purpose of preserving animal bodies from putrefaction.

"*We are convinced, from what we have seen,* that Mr. ROBERTS'S preparation is capable of keeping in a fresh, moist, and inoffensive state, the flesh of animals; and we think that it may become in this way of important use to Surgeons and Students of Anatomy; and that it may be made to promote, materially, the objects of the Anatomical Bill.

"We shall be glad if any means can be devised, by which this discovery may be made cheaply available to the profession, without obliging its inventor to tie it by *patent right.*

(Signed) "ASTLEY COOPER.
B. C. BRODIE.
JOSEPH HENRY GREEN,
GILBERT MACKMURDO,
Senior Lecturer on Anatomy, St. Thomas's Hospital.
R. O. GRAINGER,
Senior Lecturer on Anatomy Webb-street School.
BRANSBY B. COOPER,
Senior Lecturer on Anatomy at Guy's Hospital.
FREDERIC C. SKEY,
Senior Lecturer on Anatomy at Aldersgate-street School.
EDWARD STANLEY,
Senior Lecturer on Anatomy at St. Bartholomew's Hospital.
RICHARD PARTRIDGE,
Senior Lecturer on Anatomy at King's College.
R. B. TODD,"
Senior Lecturer on Anatomy at Westminster Hospital."

(C.)

COPY OF A LETTER OF Mr. S. M. PHILLIPPS, UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE.

Whitehall, Sep. 24, 1836.

"SIR,

"I am directed by LORD JOHN RUSSELL to acknowledge the receipt of Dr. BIRKBECK'S letter transmitted by you, to

gether with written communications from Mr. ROBERTS to Dr. BIRKBECK, on the subject of a process for the Preservation of Dead Bodies for the purposes of dissection.

"*The importance and utility of the process appear to be strongly attested be very eminent Anatomists.* But LORD JOHN RUSSELL would not feel himself warranted in recommending that the course proposed by Mr. ROBERTS should be adopted, namely, that the Government should pay to Mr. ROBERTS the sum of £5,000 for the process invented by him, for the use and benefit of Anatomical Schools.

(Signed) "S. M. PHILLIPPS."

"To the Right Hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, &c. &c. &c."

(D.)

COPY OF A LETTER OF HENRY WARBURTON Esq., LATE M.P. FOR BRIDPORT.

"SIR,

"I am sorry to inform you that I have received a letter from the Home Office, stating, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer having referred to that office the question of remunerating you for your discovery of a method of preserving animal substances from putrefaction, LORD JOHN RUSSELL has declined recommending a grant of public money for that purpose.

"I was not aware, until I received this communication, that the matter had been so referred.

"I should conjecture that it is *the representations of gentlemen who are opposed to summer teaching*, that *have prevailed against you.*

"I have informed SIR GEORGE SINCLAIR of the result of this application.

(Signed) "HENRY WARBURTON,
April 9, 1838."

"To Mr. W. ROBERTS."

(E.)

COPY OF A LETTER FROM THE COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.

"College of Surgeons, April 21, 1836.

"SIR,

"I am directed by the Chairman of the Board of Curators of the museum of this College to request the favor of your attendance at a meeting of the Board on Saturday next, at three o'clock; and that you will bring with you some of the Fluid used in your anti-septic process, together with any soft parts which have been preserved in it; and any matter which, in your opinion, may tend to prove the efficacy of the process.

(Signed) "C. BALFOUR."

"To Mr. W. ROBERTS."

(F).

ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATES.

"5, Saville Row, March 10, 1836.

"SIR,

"Having availed myself of the opportunity which you have afforded me, of examining various portions of the human body preserved by you, some for a period exceeding six weeks, I owe it to you, no less than to the Medical Profession, to bear my testimony to the merits of the process by which such decidedly beneficial results have been obtained. *The portion of an amputated leg and the arm called for particular attention,* inasmuch as the internal parts did not appear to be hardened, and but slightly discoloured, while they were *perfectly free from any offensive smell.*

"I am, therefore, disposed to believe that the process is likely to be useful; but to what extent, must wholly depend upon its cost, and the facility of its application.

"I have been directed by LORD JOHN RUSSELL to afford every facility for the purpose specified in your letter; but as I consider the results of your experiments *already decisive,* I TRUST YOU WILL NOT THINK IT NECESSARY TO HAVE RECOURSE TO ANY MORE EXTENDED MEANS OF PROVING IT.

(Signed) "JAMES C. SOMERVILLE,
Government Inspector of Schools of Anatomy."

"To Mr. W. ROBERTS."

(G).

"Lancaster Place, March 19, 1836.

"SIR,

"I have received your letter of yesterday, in which you request to know what I conceive to be the advantages of your Anti-septic. In my opinion they are as follows :—

"1. As the *schools are not, at present, supplied with above one-half of the bodies required for dissection during the winter*, and as the deficiency is particularly felt during the mild weather at the beginning of the session, I think that your Anti-septic would be valuable in preserving such unclaimed bodies as might be given up by the parishes during the two preceding months of August and September. By this plan, there would be something at least for students to work on, and as the burial of the bodies would only be delayed a little longer, I cannot see any objection to it.

"2. From what I have seen of the effects of your Anti-septic, *I can declare that it possesses several advantages over others which at different times have been tried.* It does not evaporate like spirit, but preserves the parts in their *natural moist condition and appearance*; it does not spoil instruments, or unnaturally harden the flesh like oxy-muriate of mercury, salt, nitre, alum, &c.

"Of course your preparation, *by keeping the atmosphere of dissecting rooms sweet, would contribute in an important degree to the health of the students;* but to be generally useful in anatomical schools, the expense of preserving each body should not exceed ten shillings.*

(Signed) "RICHARD PARTRIDGE."

"To Mr. W. ROBERTS."

(H).

"46, Lincoln's Inn Fields, March 21, 1836.

"SIR,

"In reply to your inquiry respecting the results of your Anti-septic Process, and its probable advantages, I beg to say that I cannot doubt that its general use will render the *number of subjects* available

* The cost would be *under* ten shillings.—W. R.

for the purposes of dissection, and the *regularity of the supply, by far greater than at present;* since, without the means of preservation in a state fitted for anatomical purposes *(which your plan alone offers)*, many subjects must be completely *lost and wasted.* I cannot, therefore, but regard your process, if it can be carried on at a moderate expense, as a most valuable aid to the beneficial operation of the Anatomy Bill. I may add, that the parts preserved appear to me in as perfect a condition for dissection as in the recent state.

(Signed) "JOSEPH HENRY GREEN."

"To Mr. W. ROBERTS."

(I).

"Charterhouse Square, March 22, 1836.

"SIR,

"In reply to your request that I would state my opinion on the subject of your Anti-septic, I beg to say that any mode by which the progress of decomposition can be arrested must *necessarily be advantageous to the student because it enables him to pursue his subject with greater care and deliberation, and to revise the occupation of previous days' dissection.* This is important, inasmuch as the present supply of material is very deficient.

"Another advantage would arise from the means that would thereby be afforded of *summer dissection.* I cannot say that I attach very great importance to the fact of its purifying the atmosphere of the dissecting room, because I do not think that, for the most part, medical students are very sensible of its impure condition, or that their health sustains considerable injury from that cause. I think it *calculated to confer great advantage on the student of anatomy in every country;* but in order to render it generally available, I consider the expence of its application per subject, ought not to exceed the sum of ten or twelve shillings.

(Signed) "FREDERIC C. SKEY."

"Lecturer on Anatomy, and Assistant Surgeon to St. Bartholomew's."

"To Mr.W. ROBERTS."

(J).

May, 1836.

"Having witnessed the results of the experiments of Mr. Roberts, instituted for the purpose of arresting the progress of decomposition of animal matter, I am of opinion that Mr. Roberts's plan has *proved highly successful, and that the desired end has been thus far accomplished without producing either hardness or dryness.* I am likewise of opinion, that the above invention may be advantageously applied *in aid of the difficulties* that at present attend the study of anatomy, by dissection in this country.

(Signed) "Frederic C. Skey.
"Lecturer on Anatomy, and Assistant Surgeon to St. Bartholomew's Hospital."

(K).

26, Parliament Street, August 23, 1836.

"I hereby certify, that I have had various opportunities of forming an opinion respecting the value of the Fluid prepared by Mr. Roberts for the purpose of preserving animal substances. I believe it to be a most valuable acquisition to the Anatomist, and that it preserves parts of human bodies with less alteration of the natural aspect of the different structures than any other fluid or preparation I have ever seen employed. *Indeed I cannot hesitate to say, that a limb preserved in this fluid, even for so long a period as six weeks or two months, is quite as useful for the purposes of dissection as in its freshest state.*

(Signed) "R. B. Todd.
Professor of Physiology, and Morbid Anatomy in King's College, London."

(L).

"7, New Broad Street, August 25, 1836.

"Dear Sir,

"Having examined very carefully some bodies which have been preserved for different lengths of time by means of your Anti-septic Fluid, I most willingly express my opinion that it is very likely to prove a *valuable acquisition to all medical schools.*

"There was one body with which I was much pleased, viz., one which had been *injected* a month after you had it in your possession; *the injection had run well*, and the parts which were dissected looked very fresh and exhibited all the characters of the several tissues. I likewise examined a limb in which the *large* and *deep seated* muscles had been dissected, and they possessed the colour and freshness of a body very recently dead. Under these circumstances, I hope you will meet with that encouragement to which your exertions have fully entitled you.

(Signed) "GILBERT MACKMURDO."

"To Mr. W. ROBERTS."

(M).

"7, New Broad Street, September 24, 1836."

"Having on several occasions examined different bodies which have been preserved by Mr. ROBERTS's Anti-septic Fluid for various periods of time, I most willingly bear my testimony in favour of this gentleman's discovery. I have dissected portions of bodies preserved in this manner for months previous to my visits; I found them free from the usual offensive smell; the different structures were preserved in their integrity, and the deep-seated muscles &c. exhibited the colour and firmness peculiar to the flesh of bodies recently dead. The *skin*, *vessels*, and *nerves*, as well as the *internal viscera*, excited my surprise by the natural and fresh appearance. From the experience I have had of the effects of this process, I am led to anticipate the best results, whether I consider the health of the students, or their *increased advantages* in studying Anatomy. I may also observe, that the Dissecting Instruments do not appear to be in any way injured by the fluid used by Mr. ROBERTS in his process.

(Signed) "GILBERT MACKMURDO.
Senior Lecturer on Anatomy and Physiology
at St. Thomas's Hospital."

(N).

"38, Finsbury Square, October 4, 1836.

"My Dear Lord,

"In a correspondence with Mr. Spring Rice on the subject of a very important discovery relating to the science of Anatomy, I have been informed that the matter has been referred entirely to you. Mr. Roberts, the author of this discovery, informs me that he has not yet been favoured with any communication with you; and as it is of considerable moment to him, as well as to the Anatomical Schools, to know what may be the intentions of government, I have to entreat your early attention to the subject.

"I may state to you, that *I have seen the results of the process repeatedly, and that I consider it perfect.* It is agreed by every anatomist who has spoken of it, that it is *most excellent and most valuable;* I cannot, therefore, consider there can be a more fitting opportunity for the exercise of liberality towards an inventor by such an administration as that which, happily for this country, now exists.

(Signed) "George Birkbeck."

"To the Right Honourable Lord John Russell,
Secretary of State for the Home Department, &c., &c., &c."

(O.)

"Hadley, May 28, 1838.

"Dear Sir,

"I have enclosed a letter to Sir Robert Inglis in order that you may state your case to him. What to recommend under the present difficulty in which you are involved, I do not see other than the one you have adopted, of bringing your case before the Parliament by means of some influential member.

"*I fear, however, that under the present circumstances, you will have the opposition of those, without whom your application will not be successful.*

(Signed) "Joseph Henry Green."

"To Mr. W. Roberts."

FROM SIR GEORGE SINCLAIR, BART., *(at that time a Member of Parliament, and on very intimate terms with* Mr. WARBURTON,*)* Mr. ROBERTS *received various letters, upon this subject, from which the following passages are taken* :—

(P).

"April 4, 1837.

"I have just been favoured with your letter; I regret much that there should be any difficulty thrown in the way of your attaining a full remuneration for so beneficial a discovery. Permit me to say, that I think you could not adopt a wiser course than that of submitting the whole process to Mr. WARBURTON. He is a *highly honorable* man, with whom your secret would be quite safe, a very *just* man, who would be anxious to see you properly rewarded; and a very *influential* man, whose authority would have great weight both with the Government and with the House of Commons."

(Q.)

"September 16, 1837."

In this letter SIR GEORGE alludes to a hand-bill which Mr. ROBERTS had printed, as injudicious; SIR GEORGE promises a renewal of his efforts to serve Mr. R., and concludes by repeating what he states he had often said before, that Mr. R. would never succeed with the Government unless Mr. WARBURTON pleaded his cause.

(R).

"December 21, 1837.

SIR GEORGE says: "I really am very sorry for the delay in the settlement of your matters, and have several times spoken to Mr. WARBURTON, who seems quite determined to see justice done to you; but he is now himself trying an experiment upon your plan—at least, I so understood him."

(S).

"January 26, 1838.

SIR GEORGE says: "I have never lost sight of your interests, and have sent your letter, which I think a very proper one, to Mr. WARBURTON. A PATENT *would afford you little security, from the simplicity of the process.*"

(T).

"February 8, 1838.

SIR GEORGE recommends Mr. ROBERTS to accept terms short of those which had been named to the Government (as the basis of the negociation), and to trust to obtaining afterwards "a larger compensation."

(U).

"March 3, 1838.

SIR GEORGE, in this letter, alludes to some temporary misunderstanding that subsisted at the date of it, between Mr. WARBURTON and Mr. SPRING RICE, the then Chancellor of the Exchequer (probably arising out of a motion of SIR WILLIAM MOLESWORTH'S). SIR GEORGE thus expresses his cordial wish to further Mr. ROBERTS'S application: "You know that I am quite ready to act when he (Mr. WARBURTON) calls upon me so to do; but I can do nothing till then." SIR GEORGE concludes with these words: "I am sure he has your interests at heart."

(V).

"April 7, 1838.

"I most sincerely regret the unsuccessful result of Mr. WARBURTON'S negociation; but I must also attest, from my own observation, that he was perfectly sincere and zealous in his endeavours to prevail upon the Treasury to accede to your proposition; and Mr. WARBURTON EXPRESSED TO ME HIS DECIDED CONVICTION THAT YOUR INVENTION IS FULLY ENTITLED TO THE PRAISE OF CHEAPNESS AND EFFICACY. I am quite willing to take charge of any petition for you; but no petition for a grant of public remuneration can be presented without the concurrence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

(Signed) "GEORGE SINCLAIR."

"To Mr. W. ROBERTS."

(W).

COPY OF A LETTER FROM SIR G. SINCLAIR.

"May 14, 1838.

"SIR,

"After the best consideration which I can give to the subject, I regret much that I must positively decline to bring the subject of

your invention before the House. If you can get *any other* Member to do so, and he succeeds in obtaining a Committee, YOU MIGHT SUMMON MR. WARBURTON AND MYSELF AS WITNESSES TO ATTEST THE SIMPLICITY AND THE EFFICACY OF YOUR PLAN. I really do not take any blame to myself for the failure of the attempt to obtain for you a remuneration from the government. I have neither time nor health to prosecute the matter any further, and hope you will be able to get it taken up in some more influential quarter."

(Signed) "GEORGE SINCLAIR."

"To Mr. W. ROBERTS."

The following document, inserted at the end of this Appendix is of immense importance to this Appeal, when its date is considered in reference to Mr. ROBERTS'S *experiments, including those at Guy's Hospital, which were his* final *experiments.* All *his experiments, including his* public *ones, were concluded early in the same month of October in which this letter, addressed to* Mr. ROBERTS *by order of the Anatomical Committee, was written. It contains not a syllable of allusion to failure in any one of* Mr. R's *experiments. It is impossible, therefore, to read this document and allow to it its due weight, and then to believe that there is any truth whatever in the statement of "complete failure," which* Mr. STANLEY *and* Mr. HARRISON *induced* SIR JAMES GRAHAM *to make on the occasion of* Mr. HARDY'S *motion :—*

(X),

COPY OF A LETTER FROM MR. PARTRIDGE, THE SECRETARY OF THE ANATOMICAL COMMITTEE.

"Lancaster-place, October 20, 1836.

"Mr. PARTRIDGE begs to inform Mr. ROBERTS that he communicated his note of the 4th Oct. to the Anatomical Committee which met at his house on Tuesday last, and that they unanimously declined Mr. ROBERTS'S proposal, that each Student should pay ten shillings

per annum for the use of his anti-septic: such an arrangement appeared to the Committee impracticable, and besides too expensive. The Committee propose instead, that the utility of Mr. ROBERTS's process should be carefully investigated by a Committee, to consist of Dr. BIRKBECK, Dr. SOMERVILLE, and the Members of the Committee of Teachers, viz.:—Mr. QUAIN, Mr. GRAINGER, Mr. LANE, and Mr. PARTRIDGE. Should the result prove satisfactory, the Committee of Teachers pledge themselves, in the name of the Schools of Anatomy, to recommend Mr. ROBERTS's Anti-septic to the Government as deserving encouragement and reward; and, in the event of the recommendation not receiving the attention of the Secretary of State, the Committee engage to use their best exertions with the Teachers to bring Mr. ROBERTS's liquid into general use.

"If Mr. ROBERTS can conveniently call upon Mr. PARTRIDGE, he will be happy to communicate any further information."

"To Mr. ROBERTS."

CONVICTED PRISONERS.

Abstract of return to an address of the Honorable the House of Commons, dated 21st June, 1842:—"For return of the number of Convicted Persons who died in each year, 1840 and 1841, before the expiration of their sentences, in Prisons, Hospitals, and all other places used for the reception of Convicted Persons in England."

1840.		1841	
Felony.....	249	Felony	308
Misdemeanors ..	44	Misdemeanors ..	35
Other Offences..	38	Other Offences..	28
Total	331	Total	371

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